THE AMERICAN NEPTUNE

A QUARTERLY JOURNAL OF MARITIME HISTORY

Volume 53, No. 3 Summer 1993

Vol. 53, No. 3, 1993

ISSN 0003-0155

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Support of the journal depends upon receipts from subscriptions; no payment is made for contributions or for editorial work. Subscriptions are accepted only for complete volumes, which coincide with the calendar year. In return for subscriptions received after the beginning of the year, subscribers will receive the numbers that have already appeared in the current volume, as well as the numbers that will be published during the remainder of the year. Single copies are $8.50 each in 1992. Certain complete volumes of back issues are available, although in cases where the supply is greatly reduced some numbers are sold only as parts of complete volumes.

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The American Neptune (ISSN 0003-0155) is published quarterly at $32.00 per year for domestic subscribers, $35.00 per year for foreign subscribers, and $8.50 per single issue, by the Peabody Museum of Salem and Essex Institute, Incorporated, East India Square, Salem, Massachusetts, 01970. To subscribe, write to *The American Neptune*, Publications Department, enclosing a check or money order in U. S. dollars made payable to *The American Neptune*, or your credit card number (M/C, A/E, or Visa), expiration date, and signature. Manuscripts, books for listing, and correspondence should be addressed to the Managing Editor. Second-class postage is paid at Salem, Massachusetts, and at additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to *The American Neptune*, Publications Department, Peabody Museum of Salem and Essex Institute, Incorporated, East India Square, Salem, Massachusetts 01970.

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A QUARTERLY JOURNAL OF MARITIME HISTORY

Volume 53, No. 3

Summer 1993

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SALEM, MASSACHUSETTS

PUBLISHED BY THE PEABODY MUSEUM OF SALEM AND ESSEX INSTITUTE, INCORPORATED
SALEM, MASSACHUSETTS

PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
BOOKCRAFTERS, CHELSEA, MICHIGAN

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Editor's Note

Boston, Massachusetts will be the site of the Fifth National Maritime Heritage Conference, to be held on 15-18 September 1993. Sponsored jointly by the National Trust for Historic Preservation, the National Maritime Alliance, and the National Maritime Initiative (a program of the National Park Service), the conference will bring together representatives and interested individuals from every facet of maritime heritage activity in North America. The conference will focus on the development of an American national policy on maritime heritage. Building upon the work of previous meetings (the last one was held in Baltimore in 1991), the organizers will explore ways to impress upon the new federal administration the value and needs of the American maritime heritage.

Included in the representation will be individuals involved in maritime museums, historic vessels, lighthouses, nautical archaeology, naval and maritime history, traditional small craft, preservation, conservation, education, government, the marine industry, and other maritime related activities. This audience may well include planners and developers who have benefitted from the commercial attraction of ships and other elements of our maritime heritage. They have learned that there is money in history, especially if linked to waterfront development.

The current maritime preservation effort is of major importance. There is a clear need for a national program of historic maritime preservation. The three organizations sponsoring the conference represent a broad spectrum of people and organizations from across the country. The National Trust is to be commended for taking a lead role in seeking support and resources to do for America's maritime heritage what it has done for historic preservation on land. The National Maritime Initiative is a program of the National Park Service under the U.S. Department of the Interior. It has played a key role in maritime preservation by compiling inventories of historic maritime resources and studying sites or properties for possible designation as national historic landmarks. The National Maritime Alliance is a nonprofit umbrella organization which works to bring together all of those committed to the preservation of America's maritime heritage.

The objective of these organizations is to educate the public concerning the value of America's historic maritime artifacts and resources. It is also to preserve those ships, lighthouses, small craft, and other resources. This task requires sustained financial support best committed at the federal level where all Americans are represented and where tax dollars can be distributed according to national priorities.

Establishing priorities is a difficult and sometimes thankless task. Sometimes the conflicts over what and why and how get in the way of action at the expense of the object. This point was made at a recent meeting of the Naval Institute at the U.S. Naval Academy in Annapolis. A debate was staged on the question of the authenticity of the U.S.S. *Constellation* afloat in Baltimore's Inner Harbor. The debate was drawn from arguments presented by contributors to *The American Neptune*. The session concluded that, while it is important to sort out the ship's provenance, it is more important to preserve her. Considerable repair work is needed, and historians, who know the value and significance of this vessel, could aid the restoration project, as they can other worthy projects, by using their knowledge and writing skills to galvanize public support.

Information about the upcoming conference is available from the Maritime Office, National Trust for Historic Preservation, 1785 Massachusetts Avenue N.W., Washington, D.C., 20036. The National Maritime Heritage Conference has sounded a call to action for the preservation of America's maritime heritage. A recent popular song asserted that "There is no future for a man who works the sea." We disagree, and thanks to organizations like these, there is a past which can become a vital future.

TIMOTHY J. RUNYAN

Cleveland, Ohio

Lying at the Port of Philadelphia: Vessel Types 1725-1775

JANE E. ALLEN

The port of Philadelphia lies over ninety miles up the long, winding Delaware River, not unlike London sixty miles from the mouth of the Thames. In the eighteenth century, moreover, the Delaware bore other resemblances to the Thames. Its wide mouth, full of shoals and flats, narrowed considerably at New Castle, Delaware, but the waters were deep enough for vessels of considerable size to reach the safe anchorage that lay before the city. Several channels leading into the river converged into one main ship channel six to seven fathoms deep, not unlike the approaches to London.[1] Both rivers were tidal in nature as well. The Delaware waters rose and dropped four and a half to five and a half feet with every change of the tide.[2]

William Falconer's *An Universal Dictionary of the Marine* defined a good harbor as possessing the following characteristics:

> The qualities requisite in a good harbour, are that the bottom be entirely free from rocks or shallows; that the opening be of sufficient extent to admit the entrance or departure of large ships, without difficulty; that it should have good anchoring ground, and be of easy access; that it should be well defended from the violence of the wind and sea; that it should have room and convenience to receive the shipping of different nations, and those which are laden with different merchandizes; that it be furnished with a good lighthouse and have a variety of proper rings, posts, mooring, &c. in order to remove or secure the vessels contained therein: and finally, that it have plenty of wood, and other materials for firing, besides, hemp, iron, mariners, &c.[3]

Certainly Philadelphia possessed almost all of these qualities, as Scull and Heap noted in the inscription on their large 1754 view of the city's waterfront:

> The Harbour is one of the safest and most commodious that is known, where ships of the greatest Burthern may safely Anchor in seven or eight Fathom at Low Water and may unlade to the Wharfs without the least Danger, and as this Harbour is at least thirty Miles above Salt Water it must consequently be free from the Ship Worm; the Tides rise and fall here seven or eight feet and flow up the river thirty Miles above the Town. The great Distance of Philadelphia from the Sea adds much to its Security, as the Channel is intricate and long, and is a natural Fortification, which together with a Battery a little below the Town of twenty seven pieces of large Cannon is thought sufficient Defense against Attack By Sea.[4]

Perhaps it was these similarities to the largest port in England that made Philadelphia such a successful seaport during the eighteenth century. By 1731, Philadelphia was the third largest port in the American colonies, after Boston and New York.[5] As a commercial center, colonial Philadelphia was dependent upon the vessels that carried produce and natural resources from the hinterlands of Pennsylvania to other coastal ports, the West Indies, and the mother country, and returned with varied cargoes to be consumed or traded further. To understand Philadelphia's success, it is necessary to understand what types of vessels traded there, their main characteristics, and the cargoes they carried.

Although originally settled by the Dutch and Swedes, Philadelphia was by the last quarter of the eighteenth century a primarily English colony. Those colonists who settled in the new city brought with them their tradition of ship and boat building and continued to use the types of

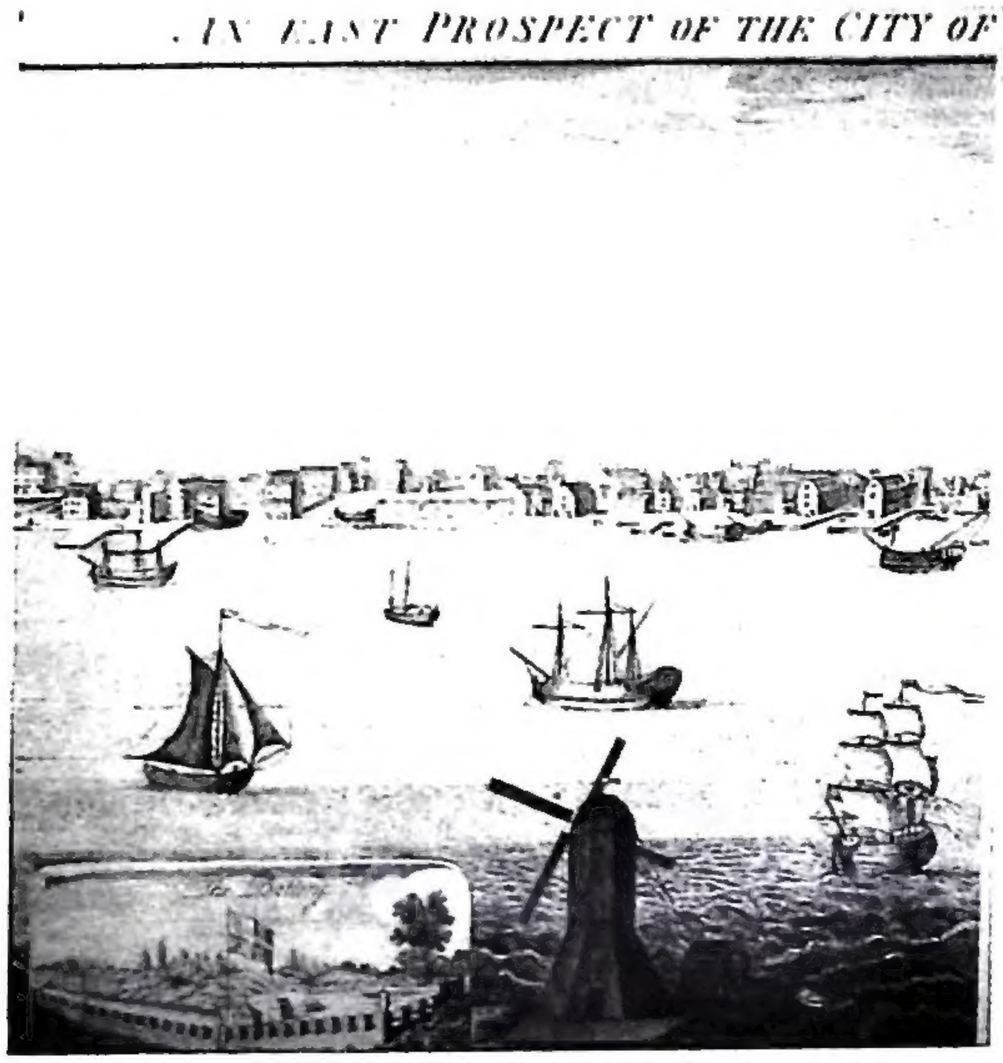
1. *East India Pilot*, Engraved Chart, "The Chart of the Entrances to The River Thames Dedicated by William Heather Drawn by S. Clements, Pilot of the King's Yacht, Engraved by J. Stevenson (London: Published by William Heather, 1794).

2. Engraved Chart, "To the Merchants and Insurers of the City of Philadelphia This Chart of Delaware Bay and River . . . Is Dedicated By a Friend to Trade and Navigation Joshua Fisher" (Philadelphia: Joshua Fisher, c. 1775).

3. William Falconer, *An Universal Dictionary of the Marine*, 2d ed. (London: Printed for T. Cadell, 1771).

4. "An East Prospect of the City of Philadelphia, taken by George Heap from the Jersey Shore, under the Direction of Nicolas Scull," engraved by Gerard Vandergucht (London, 1754).

5. *Pennsylvania Gazette*, 29 December 1730 - 5 January 1731.



Scull and Heap's 1754 "East Prospect of the City of Philadelphia" was one of the most ambitious portraits of the colonial port. At commissioned the drawing to show off his flourishing colony, it also serves to illustrate the variety of vessel types that frequented

vessels known to them previously. Until 1700, hull form and sail arrangement determined class, but during the eighteenth century the nomenclature of sailing ship rig types developed.[6] Port records from colonial Philadelphia show that vessels were divided into two different classes. Small craft included boats, skiffs, flats, ferries, bateaux, rafts, and sometimes shallops. The larger vessel class included ships, snows, brigs and brigantines, schooners, sloops, and shallops.

Small Craft

The English marine dictionaries of the period shed some light on the types of boats or small craft in use. Blanckley's *A Naval Expositor* defines the term "craft" as ". . . small Vessels, such as Ketches, Hoys, Smacks, &c. they call all such small Craft."[7] Falconer further elaborated on this definition:

> Craft, a general name for all sorts of vessels employed to load or discharge merchant-ships, or carry alongside, or return stores of men of war: such are lighters, hoys, barges, prames, &c.[8]

6. Ralph Davis, *The Rise of the English Shipping Industry in the 17th and 18th Centuries* (Newton Abbott, England: David and Charles, 1962), 46.

7. Thomas Riley Blanckley, *A Naval Expositor* (London: Printed by E. Owen in Warwick Lane and Engraved by Paul Fourdinier at Charing Cross, 1750), 44.

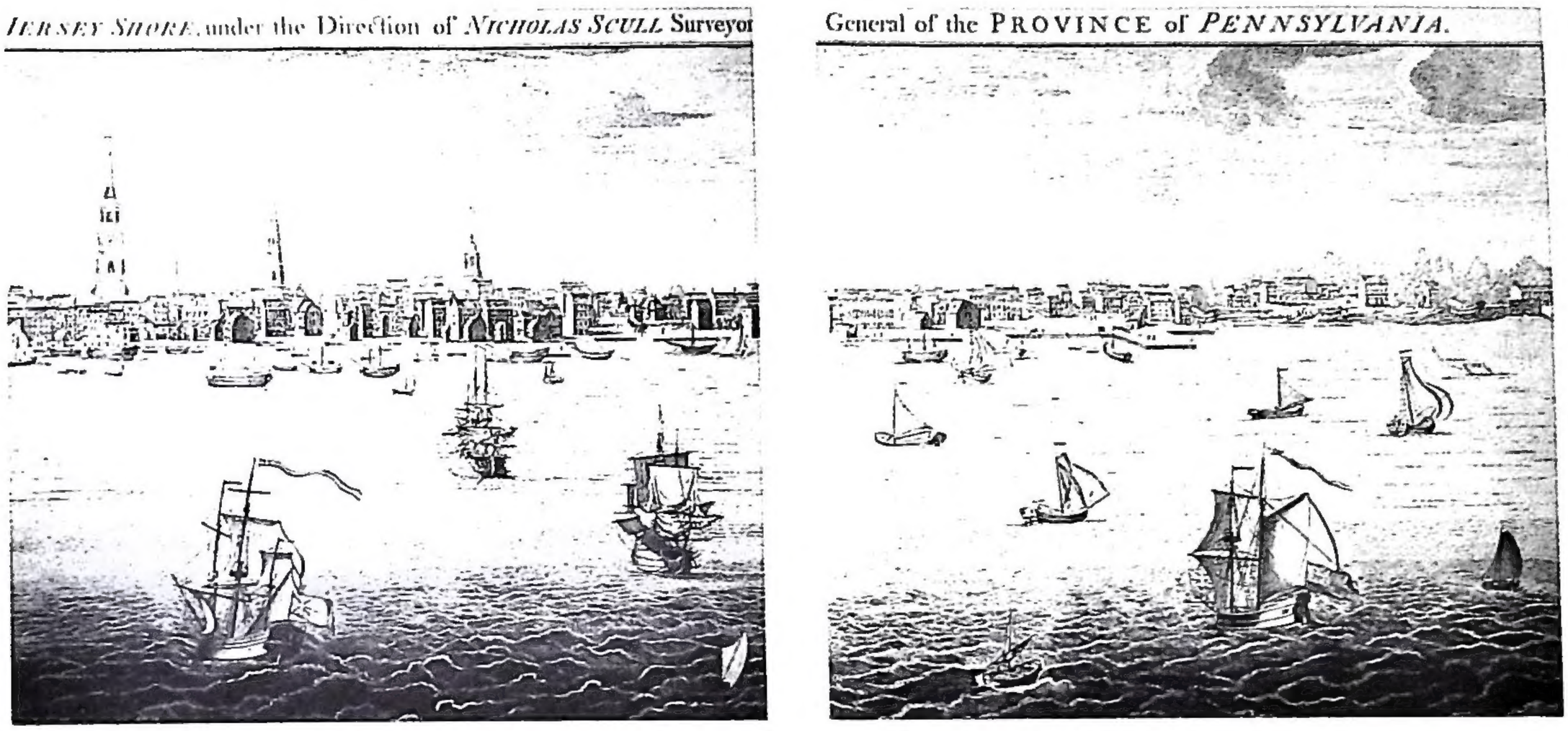
8. Falconer, *An Universal Dictionary of the Marine.*

In Penn's colony, the term craft or small craft meant much the same thing. Such vessels were used primarily to transport goods and passengers locally and could be used in the shallower marshes and estuaries. The 1761 "Act for making the River Schuylkill navigable, and for the Preservation of Fish in the said River" pointed out the need for dredging because the river was only navigable by "Rafts, Boats, and other small Craft, in Times of high Freshes only, occassioned by the Obstructions of Rocks, and Bars of Sand and Gravel."[9] The city also passed laws to prevent the building of bridges in order to allow access to creeks for small boats. In 1725, an "Act for better preventing Obstructions to Navigation of Chester Creek and other navigable Creeks and Rivers in this province" ordered that a drawbridge be built over Chester Creek "to allow passage of Sloops and Shallops to the Mills" and to allow "Rafts of logs to pass out from the Mills." The law also forbade the erection of any bridge "that shall or may anywise stop or hinder the Navigation of any such Sloop, Shallop, Flat, or other Craft, or Floats of Logs."[10]

Small craft played an important role in bringing goods from both Pennsylvania and New Jersey to the port for exportation, and those carrying them had to be careful not to deliver damaged goods. A 1733 act passed to help control the transport of flour, one of the colony's most

9. *Acts of Assembly*, 1761, 281, Index of American Culture, Philadelphia file, Van Pelt Library, University of Pennsylvania [hereafter IAC].

10. *Acts of Assembly*, 1725, 142, IAC.



more than eighty-two inches wide in four large sheets, it depicts over a mile of the city's waterfront. While William Penn the port of Philadelphia. Photos courtesy of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

prized products, shows that boats and other craft were employed in its transport as were carts or wagons on land:

> That if the Owner or Possessor of any Cart, Wain, Waggon, Boat, Flat or Shallop, cause or suffer any Flour or Bread to be wet or take Damage . . . in the moving, carrying, or transporting same from any Mill or Landing Place to the Place of Exportation. . . .[11]

One type of small craft used in colonial Philadelphia was the canoe. Falconer described the canoe as "a sort of Indian boat or vessel, formed of the trunk of a tree hollowed, and sometimes of several pieces of bark fastened together."[12] The Assembly's 1700 "Act about Boats and Canoes" set the reward for finding a boat which was adrift at five shillings and a canoe at two shillings sixpence. Any man taking or setting adrift a boat or canoe without the consent of the owner had to pay twice the "value of such vessel Boat or Canoe."[13] Canoes were used, as one account in the *Pennsylvania Gazette* recounted, for transporting people, although not always successfully:

> And sometime last Week, . . . one Piles a Fidler, with his Wife, were overset in a Canoo near Newtown Creek. The Good Man, 'tis said, prudently secur'd his Fiddle, & let his Wife go to the Bottom.[14]

Drowning accidents also occurred with other small craft, which may have been particularly susceptible to accidents. Again the *Gazette* reported:

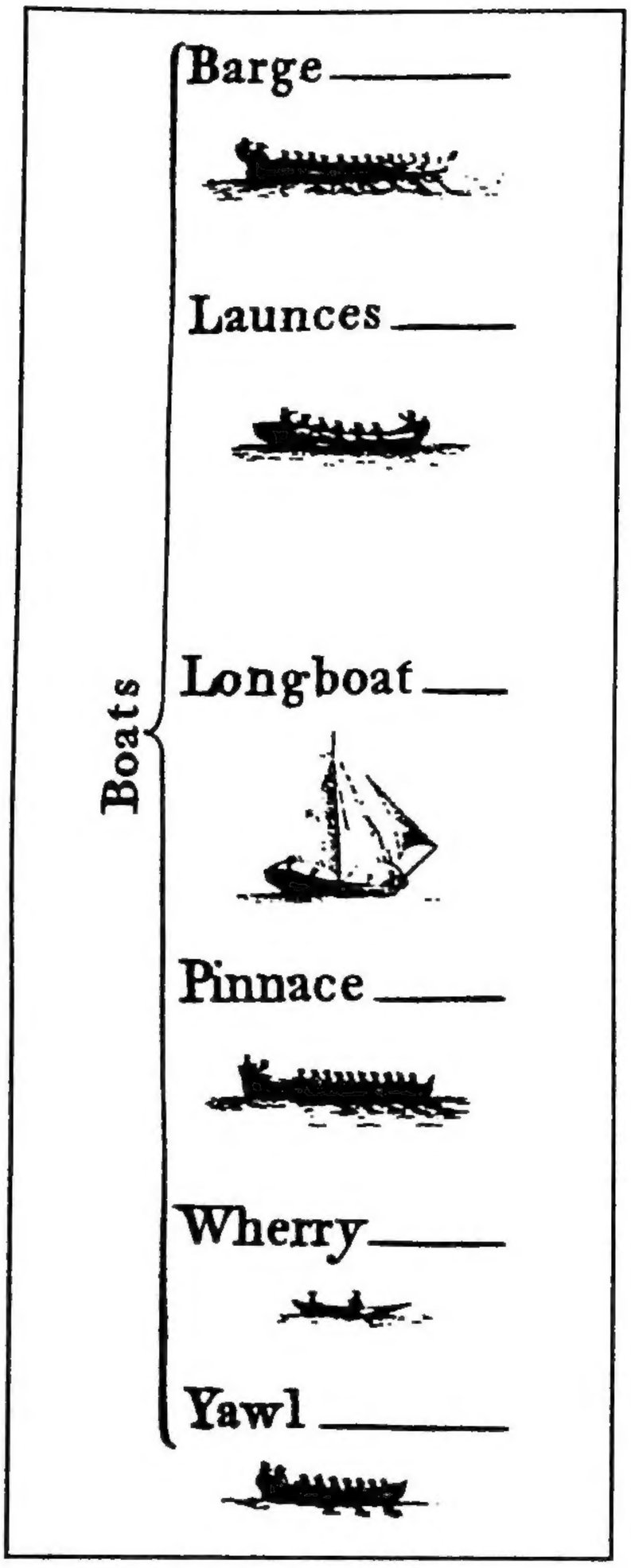
> Last Saturday fo'night, Alexander Lindsey of this Place, going down the River in a Boat with his Servant Man, accidentally fell overboard near Red-Bank, and was lost. The Man was apprehended and put in Glocester Prison, but is since discharged.[15]

When boats were stolen or set adrift, their owners frequently advertised rewards for their return. These advertisements offer some descriptions of boats and give an idea of their size and shape.

> Whereas about the last Fair held in Philadelphia, a Boat was taken away from Joseph Warner's Wharff, near Race Street, sixteen Feet Keel, almost new, flat Bottom with an Iron Band about her Stem (not Stern, as formerly mentioned) had a Split in her Stern. Whoever secures said Boat, so as the Subscriber may have her again, shall have Ten Shillings Reward paid by John Doyle.[16]

The thirteen-foot boat described below also had a hole for a mast up forward, although whether boats were generally rowed and/or sailed is uncertain:

11. *Acts of Assembly*, 1733, 176, IAC.
12. Falconer, *An Universal Dictionary of the Marine*.
13. *Acts of Assembly*, Newcastle, 14 October-27 November 1700, IAC.
14. *Pennsylvania Gazette*, 9-16 October 1729.
15. Ibid.
16. *Pennsylvania Gazette*, 11 February 1762.



Illustrations from Thomas Blanckley's *A Naval Expositor* (London, 1750) depict the types of small craft seen at the port of colonial Philadelphia. Photo courtesy of the Library Company of Philadelphia.

Went adrift in the River Delaware, opposite League Island, the second inst. a flat bottom'd boat, with a piece split off her stern on the larboard side, about 13 feet in length, a hole for her mast in her forthought [forethwart], with an iron chain fasten'd to her bow, an iron plate at each end of her bottom, turns up the stem and stern. Whoever takes up said boat, shall have Ten Shillings reward: and reasonable charges paid by Francis Garrigues.[17]

17. *Pennsylvania Gazette*, 1750, no. 94.

Boats varied in value but were frequently listed in wills at £4 to £5,[18] a rather small investment for something obviously very practical and necessary.

Pilots, whom Falconer described as "the person[s] charged with the direction of a ship's course, on or near the sea-coast, and into the roads, bays, and rivers, haven, &c . . ."[19] were not organized by law until 1766.[20] Pilots waited at the Delaware Capes and went out to meet incoming vessels in order to guide them up to Philadelphia or waited at Philadelphia to take them down the river. They were to give assistance to any vessel within six leagues[21] to the south of Cape Henlopen or east of Cape May.[22] A memo to the Committee of Safety notes that pilots who were to "carry vessels to Chester" were to return immediately to Philadelphia "by land or in their Skiffs."[23] Skiffs were probably similar to wherries, a general all-purpose rowboat. Whether these same skiffs were used on the lower reaches of the bay is uncertain.

Since verbal evidence describing the appearance and general characteristics of small craft is scant, and no full scale examples exist, it is necessary to turn to pictorial evidence of the period. Blanckley's *A Naval Expositor*, besides defining each of the vessels he considered to be boats, including barges, launches, longboats, pinnaces, wherries, and yawls, had handsome engravings depicting each (see opposite). It is evident from these engravings that all were rowed except the longboat, which had a mainsail, staysail, and jib, and all were used for transporting people and goods. Falconer confirmed Blanckley's depictions by defining the term boat as ". . . a small open vessel, conducted on the water by rowing or sailing." A close examination of pictorial representations of the port of Philadelphia shows many of these types of boats in use in the colony's waters.

George Wood's 1735 watercolor "The Prospect of Philadelphia from Wickacove" (see page 153) shows three small boats tied off to the sterns of large vessels and one being rowed towards the shore carrying several passengers. Unfortunately, lack of detail and irregular scale make it difficult to determine their exact nature other than that they are double ended and very bluff bowed.

18. *Philadelphia Probate Wills and Inventories* 1725-35, 86, 331b, 1753-59, 548, IAC.

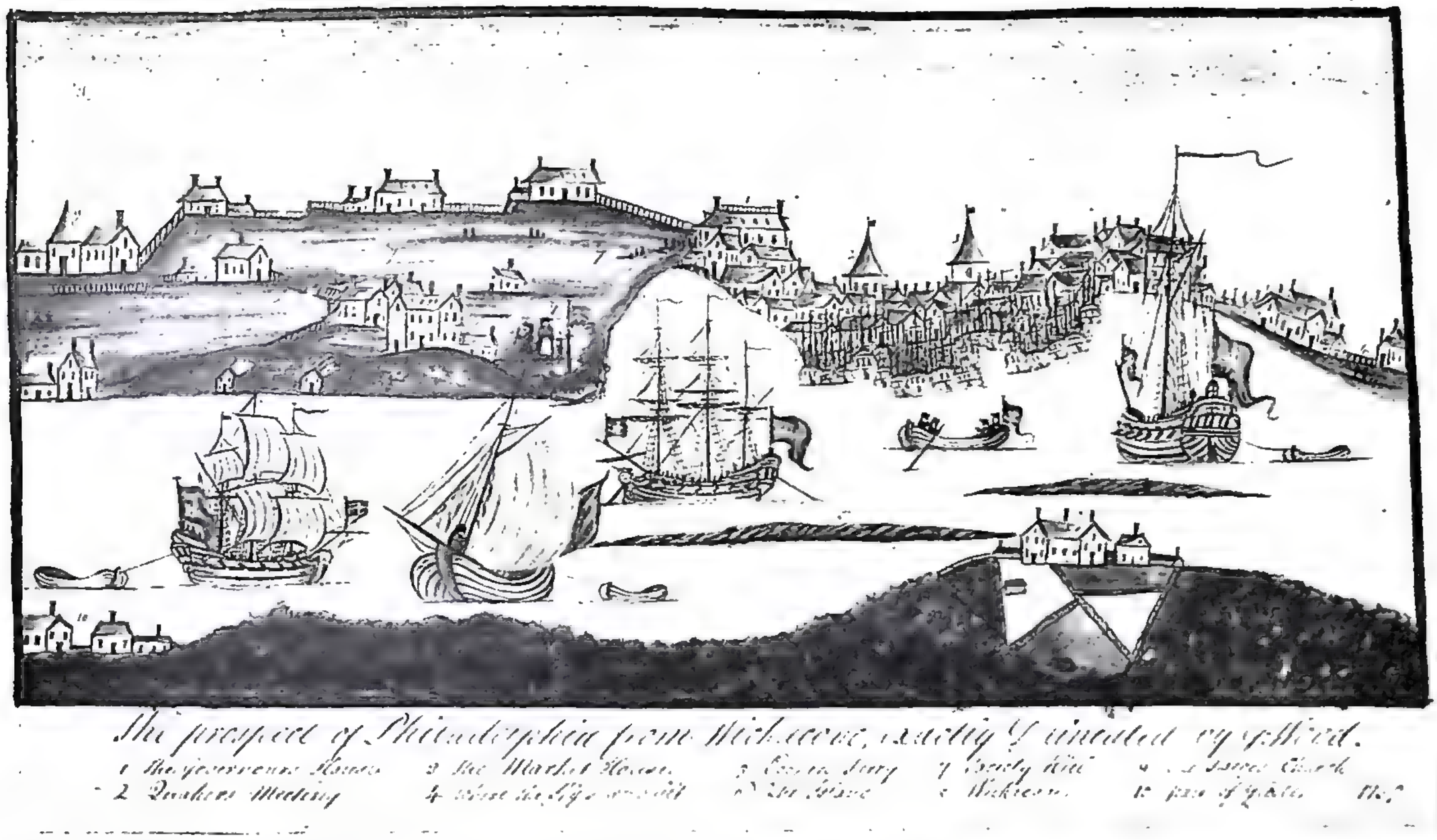
19. Falconer, *An Universal Dictionary of the Marine*.

20. *Acts of Assembly*, 1766, 323, IAC.

21. A league is equal to three nautical miles.

22. *Acts of Assembly*, 1773, 467, IAC.

23. Robert Whyte, Committee and Council of Safety, 2 November 1775, Autograph Collection, Simon Gratz, Historical Society of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania (hereafter HSP). All manuscripts cited are from the collections of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania unless otherwise noted.

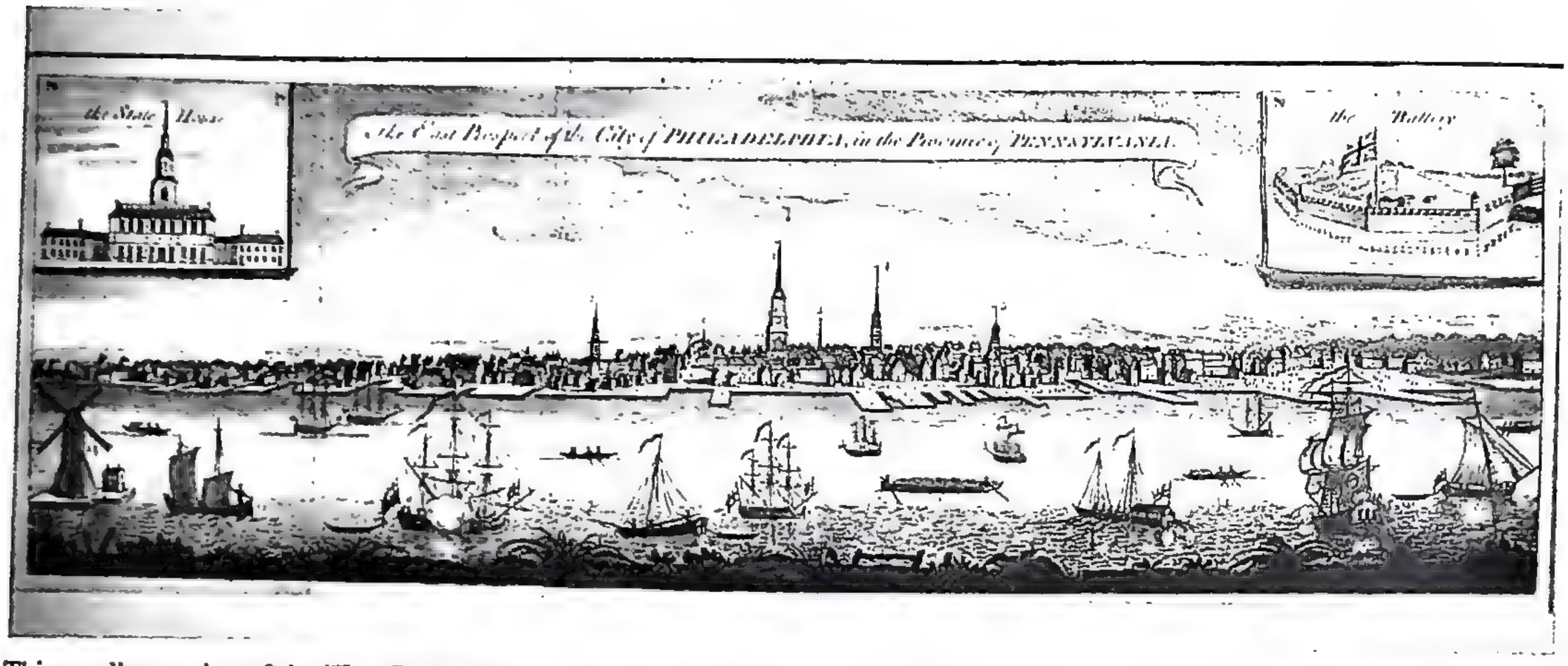


This 1735 watercolor entitled, "The prospect of Philadelphia from Wickacove, exactly Delineated by G. Wood," depicts the area of the city south of Old Swedes Church along the Delaware River. Photo courtesy of The Henry Francis duPont Winterthur Museum, Winterthur, Delaware.

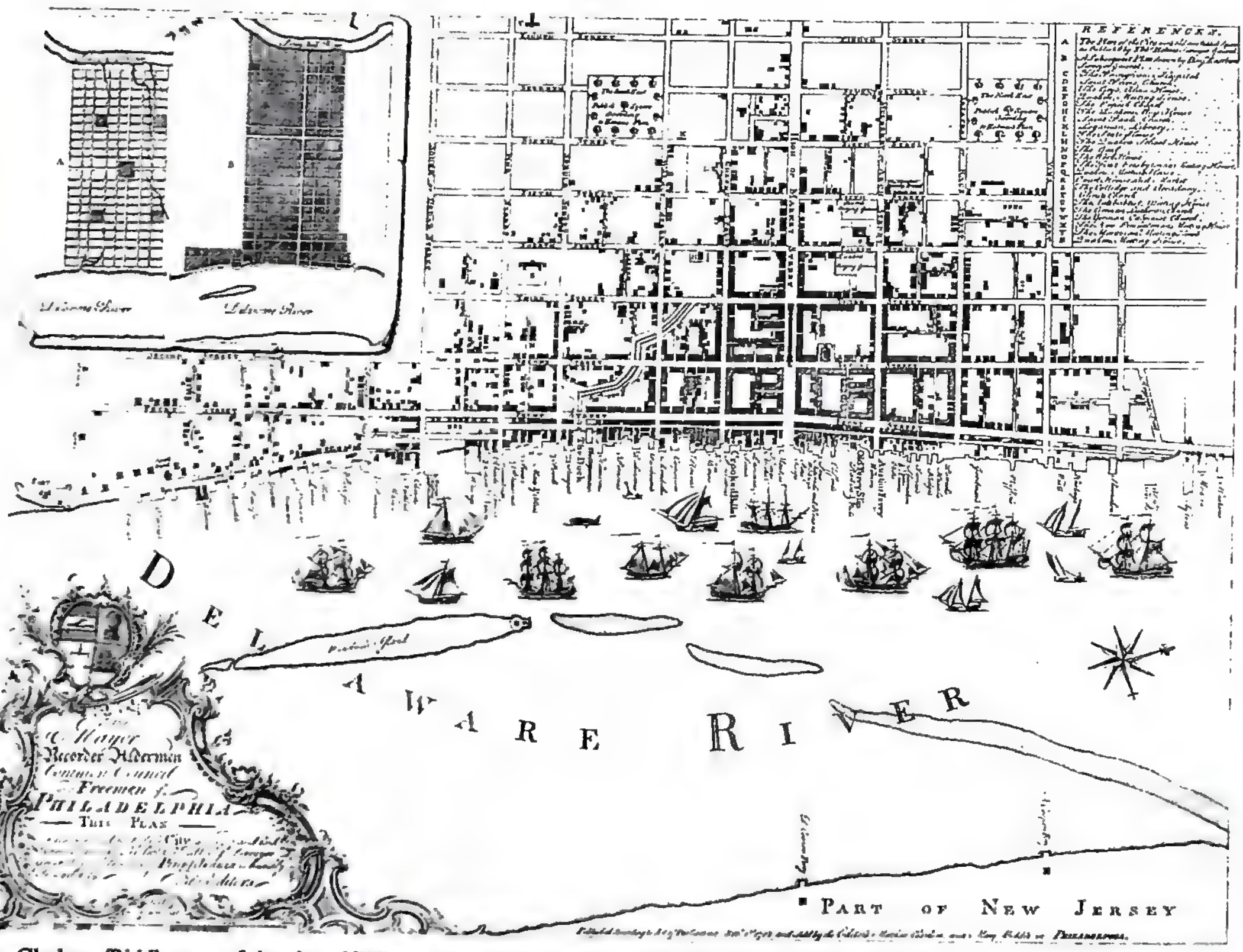
In 1756 Scull and Heap's original "East Prospect" was reduced in size and reworked to include the New Jersey shore in the foreground to show the city as a riverport. Photo courtesy of the Philadelphia Maritime Museum.

Scull and Heap's "East Prospect of the City of Philadelphia," 1754 (pages 150-151), gives a more detailed view of the boats in use. It shows both wherries and small sprit-rigged boats, one of which is even shown towing a large disabled sloop. These sprit-rigged boats appear to be both double ended and square sterned and were probably about fifteen to twenty feet long. They were also likely to carry oars to be used when winds were too light to sail.

A 1756 version of the Scull and Heap view (above) shows several sprit-rigged sailboats in use as well as



This smaller version of the "East Prospect" brought the port of Philadelphia to the attention of the British public when it appeared in a series of American city views in the *London Magazine* in 1761. Photo courtesy of the Philadelphia Maritime Museum, J. Welles Henderson Collection.



The Clarkson/Biddle map of the city of Philadelphia (1762) shows details of buildings, alleys, streets, and wharves and also depicts a variety of vessel types. Photo courtesy of the I. N. Phelps Stokes Collection, Miriam and Ira D. Wallach Division of Art, Prints and Photographs, The New York Public Library, Astor, Lenox and Tilden Foundations.

several wherries heavily laden with hogsheads, crates, and perhaps sacks of flour or grain. Falconer described a wherry as a "light sharp boat, used in a river or harbour for carrying passengers from place to place." Wherries appear again in a 1761 version of the "East Prospect" printed for the *London Magazine* and in the Clarkson/ Biddle map of Philadelphia of 1762 (opposite).

One rather peculiar boat appears only in the Scull and Heap "East Prospect" of 1761 (opposite). This seems to be a two-masted barge, square sterned, with after cabin and rowed by five men. Falconer described a barge as:

> . . . a vessel or boat of state, furnished with elegant apartments, canopies and cushions; equiped with a band of rowers, and decorated with flags and streamers; Generally used for processions on the water, by noblemen, officers of state or magistrates of great cities.[24]

William Penn had such a barge for transportation to and from Philadelphia to Pennsbury Manor, located north of the city on the river. It is doubtful, however, that many were ever used on the river because of the expense of maintenance and manning for such a limited use.

Several other types of boats, such as rafts and batteaux, appear in contemporary illustrations. Rafts were probably larger, flat-bottomed boats or logs tied together to carry large objects across the river, such as carriages or animals. The records of the Quarter Sessions mentioned that an area for the "Public for Landing of Rafts and other Water Carriages coming down the [Schuylkill] River" would be of great use.[25]

Batteaux do not appear in Philadelphia records by name until the 1760s, when one is mentioned in conjunction with a raft:

> Went adrift, on Friday Night, the 28th of last Month from the Slip below Willing and Morris's Stores, about half Ebb, Seven Rafts of Pine and Cedar Boards, some Plank, and some Scantling, with a Battoe, in which was a Pair of Sculls fastened to one of the Rafts. Whoever will give Intelligence of the said Rafts, so as they may be had again, shall have Three Pounds Reward, paid at the New Printing Office, in Market Street, Philadelphia.[26]

To Falconer a batteau was a small sailing craft ". . . commonly employed in carrying stores, provisions, passengers, &c. to and from the ship." He described such vessels as being lapstrake or clinker built: "In structure of this sort of boats, the lower edge of every plank in the side over-lays the upper edge of the plank below, which is called by ship-wrights clinch-work." A 1773 *Pennsylvania Gazette* provides a bit more information on a batteau:

> Was stole, or went adrift, from Salter's Wharff, on the 28th of May last, a new Batteau, never painted, with a Pair of Pine Sculls and a Waggon Trace Chain, about 18 Feet Keel, and has a Live-Oak Stem. Whoever will bring said Batteau to the New Ferry house shall receive Ten Shillings Reward.[27]

The use of live oak for the stem is noteworthy. Live oak was not indigenous to the province and would have been imported from the southern colonies. Also, the fact that the boat was not painted seems to indicate that most boats were painted in some manner. A *Gazette* report of the loss of a longboat confirms this:

> Taken away, or went adrift, from the Brig *Mary and Elizabeth*, James Sparks, Commander, about the 28th of 12th month last, a Moses built Long boat, about 16 Feet Keel, Turpentine Sides, Wail painted black, and upper Streak red; Whoever has taken up said Boat, and will bring her to the owner, shall be handsomely rewarded for their Trouble and reasonable charges paid by John Head.[28]

Ferries crossed the Delaware at Easton, Bristol, Trenton, Yardley,[29] and at Philadelphia, while others crossed the Schuylkill River as well.[30] Ferries carried people, horses, coaches or chariots, chaises with two or four wheels, carts or wagons, sleds, cows, sheep, and hogs. Rates varied accordingly.[31] Ferries were large, shallow-draft, flat-bottomed, box-like scows to be rowed or poled, whereas small faster wherries carried passengers back and forth. A 1773 advertisement for a newly established ferry near Trenton described their use:

> Whereas a Ferry is erected for crossing the Delaware . . . so remote from the Falls as not to be molested by the rapidity of the stream, or rocks, and free from the inconvenience of shallops laying so as to incomode the landing of the ferry-boats. The landing on the Jersey shore, on Mr. Bond's land, is on a smooth gravel bottom, at all times of the tide, so that there will be no difficulty in landing passengers on account of the freshes or ice. On the Pennsylvania side, the shore is smooth, and a commodious wharff built, and the boats lie without being aground . . . . Good flats for horses and carriage, and small boats, are provided, and the public may depend on good attendance, by Elijah Bond and John Thornton.[32]

24. Falconer, *An Universal Dictionary of the Marine*.
25. *Quarter Sessions* 1773-1775, 62, IAC.
26. *Pennsylvania Gazette*, 4 February 1762.
27. *Pennsylvania Gazette*, 9 June 1773.
28. *Pennsylvania Gazette*, 8 March 1764.
29. *Diary of Elizabeth Drinker*, 1764-66, 6-7, 1768-71, 32, 1771-75, 17, IAC.
30. *Minutes of the Common Council*, 766, IAC.
31. *Acts of Assembly*, 1723, 124, IAC.
32. *Pennsylvania Gazette*, 23 June 1773.

Scull and Heap's "East Prospect" of 1756 shows a large ferry, loaded with cows and sheep, being pushed off the shore on the New Jersey side of the Delaware River (see page 153). Ferries on the Schuylkill were maneuvered in a different fashion. They were pulled across by a pulley system, and the ropes often had to be slackened or sunk to allow the passage of small boats.[33]

The term "flats" appears several times in the written records. The 1772 Province Tax records listed nineteen men with the occupation of "Flatmen."[34] The 1732 Court Records reported the theft of a flat and loss of income of nine shillings per week for the owner; later Court Records mention a man who bought a flat for £29 for employment.[35] The *Pennsylvania Gazette* reported:

> Sunday last the Body of one John Speare, who fell into the river between a Flat and a Ship was drowned about a Week before, was taken up. . . .[36]

Flats were used as lighters to offload cargoes and carry them from the larger vessel at anchor to the wharf. They provided employment for many. Whether a flat was a large flat-bottomed craft laden down as in the Scull and Heap view of 1761 (page 154), or whether they were smaller boats, is not clear from the evidence available. They may have been propelled by sails, as they are so described in the Acts of Assembly:

> That all Flats or Boats passing up and down said River, [Schuylkill] if they shall have their masts to strike or take down occassionally. . . .[37]

The last type of small craft that is often mentioned in conjunction with boats or flats is the shallop. This causes a perplexing problem, as shallops also fall into the larger vessel category. Small shallops were probably undecked sailing vessels used to carry goods locally. On 1 March 1729, the *Pennsylvania Gazette* recounted the following incident:

> We hear that one of the Shallops going down to the Salem-Fair sprung a Leak in the River, and the Goods very much damaged.

Shallops seem to have been the favored mode of transporting flour. John Morton's advertisement for a mill extolled the virtue of accessibility for shallops:

> To lett . . . a Good Merchant-Mill, situated on Brandywine Creek, below the Bridge, within half a mile of Wilmington, on a never-failing stream, and on the tide water, where shallops may come, and load and unload without difficulty . . . and all the other utensils necessary for carrying on the manufacture of superfine flour. . . .[38]

The Acts of Assembly also mentioned shallops, stating that casks of flour "being brought in any open Boat, Shallop, or upon the Deck of any other Vessels" should be covered with a tarpaulin.[39]

Decked Vessels

It was not until the end of the seventeenth century that merchantmen or cargo-carrying vessels became radically different from warships. During their many wars with the Dutch, the English took Dutch vessels known as flyboats as prizes and began to see the advantage of such a type. The flyboat was a bulk carrier, with a relatively flat bottom, small rake, bluff bow, and long keel. Its large hold made it ideal for carrying large amounts of goods, and it could be handled by a small crew, which made it cheaper to operate. By 1700, the English became aware of the economy of these vessels, and English shipbuilders began to incorporate new design principles into their work.[40] By the mid-eighteenth century, several treatises on shipbuilding were available. Mungo Murray, shipwright in His Majesty's Yard at Deptford, published one in 1754. His 1765 *Supplement to the Treatise on Ship-building* summarized this design change. Murray wrote "that the first design of building floating vessels, was to carry goods from one place to another." He continued:

> Now the properest vessels for that purpose would be such as could contain the greatest quantity of goods, and carry them in the shortest time to the intended port: So that capacity and velocity seem to be essential qualifications.[41]

Murray's philosophy manifested itself in the actual design of vessels. "We have now found that all ships must be longer than they are broad," he wrote, "and likewise tapered at each end. . . ."[42] Vessels no longer needed to be stable platforms for gundecks, but rather needed speed and maneuverability achieved by lengthening the ship in relation to its beam. Falconer reported that those in favor of narrower vessels reasoned that:

> . . . a narrow vessel meets with less resistance in passing through the water; 2dly, That by increasing the length she will drive less to leeward; 3dly, That

33. *Acts of Assembly*, 1766, 318, IAC.
34. *Province Tax Records*, 1772, IAC.
35. *Court Records*, January-February 1732, 57, 1732-44, 122, IAC.
36. *Pennsylvania Gazette*, 15-22 October 1730.
37. *Acts of Assembly*, 1766, 318, IAC.
38. *Pennsylvania Gazette*, 23 June 1773.
39. *Acts of Assembly*, 1767, 330, IAC.
40. Davis, *Rise of the English Shipping Industry*, 45-54.
41. Mungo Murray, *Supplement to the Treatise on Ship-building* (London: Printed for A. Millar, 1765), 1.
42. Ibid., 3.

> according to this principle, the water-lines will be more conveniently formed to divide the fluid; 4thly, That a long and narrow ship will require less sail to advance swiftly; that her masts will be lower, and her rigging lighter; and by consequence, the seamen less fatigued with the managing of sails, &c.

Conversely, those who preferred broader-beamed vessels cited the following rationale:

> . . . this form is better preserved to preserve a good battery of guns; 2ndly, That there will be more room to work the guns conveniently . . . .[43]

Along with the change in hull design, increasingly complex sail rigs improved the capacity to sail closer to the wind, which made voyages faster and safer. Breaking up the sail area into smaller areas made it safer to handle sails with smaller crews and consequently saved money.[44]

The large cargo vessels in use in colonial Philadelphia reflected this change in the English shipbuilding tradition and the increased emphasis on cargo-carrying ability. Therefore, the critical measure of a vessel was its burthen or burden, measured in tons, rather that its beam, or ability to carry guns.

Blanckley explained that the burden "of a Ship, is her Content, or the Number of Tuns she will carry," and Falconer defined it as "the weight or measure of any species of merchandize that a ship will carry when fit for sea." As early as 1717, Philadelphia passed an "Act for raising Duty upon Tonnage of Ships and Vessels."[45] By 1752 vessels of over thirty tons had to pay six shillings, and those over one hundred tons seven shillings and six-pence per ton to the comptroller.[46] In 1773 the tonnage duty was raised and had to be paid by all vessels coming into the port within forty-eight hours of arrival, as well as by those owners of vessels which were built in the city.

> Duty of Tonnage, upon all Ships and other Vessels coming into or going out of this Province (Shallops and other small Vessels, trading within the River and Bay of Delaware, and along the Coast, as far as Sandy-Hook to the Eastward and as far as Indian River to the Southward, only excepted) that is to say, for all of the said Ships or Vessels the Sum of Seven-pence per Ton to be accounted taken and paid, according to the Measure of every such Ship or Vessel . . . .[47]

It is interesting to note that the smaller vessels trading locally were exempted from taxation.

43. Falconer, *An Universal Dictionary of the Marine.*
44. Davis, *Rise of the English Shipping Industry*, 76.
45. *Acts of Assembly*, 1717, 85, IAC.
46. *Acts of Assembly*, 1752, 246, IAC.
47. *Acts of Assembly*, 1773, 471, IAC.

Measurement of tonnage was spelled out very clearly:

> . . . every single decked Ship or Vessel shall be measured by the Length of the Keel, and the Breadth of the Beam, taken within Board by the Midship Beam, from Plank to Plank; and the Depth of the Hold, from the Ceiling Plank, next the Kelson, to the under Part of the Deck Plank, then multiply the Length by the Breadth, and the Product thereof by the Depth, and divide the whole by Ninety-five, the Quotient shall give the Contents of the Tonnage of such single decked Vessel; and in order to find the Length of the Keel, measure the Gun Deck, from the Fore-part of the Stern-post to the Fore-part of the Stem, deduct three Fifths of the Beam for the Rake forward, and four Inches, of the Length of each Foot of the Stern-post, as high as the Gun Deck, for the Rake abaft the Remainder shall be the Length of the Keel. And every two decked Ship, which carries Goods between Decks, Shall be measured in the manner herein after directed; . . . the Breadth to be taken within Board by the Midship Beam, from Plank to Plank, multiplied by the Length of the Keel, to be measured as herein before directed, and the Product thereof multiplied by one Half of the Breadth on the Midship Beam as aforesaid, the whole divided by Ninety-five, the Quotient shall be, and is hereby declared to be, the Contents of Tonnage of every two decked Ship or Vessel. . . .[48]

Tonnage, therefore, was the critical measurement, and during this period tonnage was related to vessel type. Every eighteenth-century merchant knew and understood this fact. Cargoes were procured by merchants and then laden aboard vessels. The correct amount of goods had to be purchased and packed aboard the proper sized vessel, since a vessel sailing light lost money for its owners. One contemporary merchant expressed his concern that a vessel of proper size was not available:

> I found little difficulty in procuring the Goods, but some in providing a Conveyance, as no other Freight offered for Spanish Town, and every Vessel that was in offer was too big for the present Occassion, the one I have obtained, tho not so much on the opposite Extreme, yet ... a little too small for all the Goods....[49]

The merchant continued:

> I wish an exact compliance had been in my power, from the orders of the Case was next to impossible; which must hereafter be carefully attended to and this Factor left to the Discretion to ship a little more Goods than [?] which may be absolutely necessary to fill up perhaps the only Vessel he may have in his Offer, or what Goods to Omit in case a small Vessel offers....[50]

48. *Acts of Assembly*, 1773, 471-72, IAC.
49. *Roberdeau Accounts*, 24 March 1766, 96, IAC.
50. Ibid.

"The South East Prospect of The City of Philadelphia by Peter Cooper, Painter," 1720. Photo courtesy of the Library Company of Philadelphia.

The principal trading grounds for large vessels were the West Indies, eastern coastal North America, and England. Among the commodities traded were flour, wine, wheat, corn, beef, rice, sugar, rum, fish, iron, tar, pitch, turpentine, molasses, beer, coffee, lumber, shingles, barrel staves, and animal skins.[51] Goods were transported in casks, pipes, tierces, kegs, barrels, bushels, hogsheads, half barrels, half hogsheads, boxes, bags, and crates, all of which had to be carefully packed below deck in the hold. The cost of freight for carrying goods was charged by the ton. In the 1770s, one captain repeatedly charged £4 per ton for carrying goods from Philadelphia to Charleston, South Carolina.[52] A ship from the River Thames to Philadelphia charged the higher rate of £9 per ton in 1765, probably taking into account the increased distance to be traveled and time involved.[53] Cargoes were usually mixed in nature, as shown by a bill of lading for the brigantine *Charlestown Packet*, which ran regularly between Philadelphia and Charleston, South Carolina:

190 Barrels Flour
31 ½ Barrels Flour
42 Cags flower
46 Barrels Bread
14 Hhd Rum
17 Barrels Rum
2 Cask Loaf Sugar
10 Boxes Candles
2 ½ barrels Tongues
5 Bags of Seeds
6 Tubbs Beef
24 horse collars
100 Cags bread
10 barrels Beer
12½ barrels Beer
112 Bushel Oats
40 Cheeses
4 Barrels potatoes
1½ Barrel Beef
24 Boxes Soap
30 Reams Paper
A sett of hay Screws
1 Paper Bagg Cabbage[54]

51. "An Aggregate and Valuation of the Exports, from the Port of Philadelphia . . . 1771-1774," Society Miscellaneous Collections, Box 13A.

52. Bills of Lading, Uriah Woolman, 1772-1773, HSP.

53. Bills of Lading 1734-1784, Ship *Myrtilla*, John Reynel Master, 30 May 1765, HSP.

54. Bills of Lading, Uriah Woolman, Sam Wright Master, Brgt. *Charlestown Packet*, October 1772, HSP.

Most manufactured goods arriving in Philadelphia were imported from England. The *Pennsylvania Gazette* advertised the following newly arrived shipment in 1750:

> Imported in the snow *Wandsworth*, Capt. Smith, &c. and to be sold by Thomas Lloyd, At his house, near the Widow Robert's Coffee-house; Copperas, allum, madder, ground redwood, gauls, F gunpowder in quarter and half barrels, men and boys castor hats, counterpaines, Scotch threads, striped cotton for gowns, pins, womens and children's best Bath gloves and mittens, garterings, mens worsted and cotton caps, mens and womens, boys and girls worsted and thread hose, cotton hollands and checks, cambricks, tandems, garlix, Irish and Russia linnens, ozenbrigs and ticklinburgs, superfine and common chints, calicoes, cherriderries, buckrams, romals, soosees, sicklersoys, steel, long and short pipes, carpenters and coopers tools, locks, nails and hinges, ships canvas, No. 1 & c., coffee, cordage, grindstones, and corks, white lead ground, or un-ground, yellow oker, vermillion, red lead and Spanish brown, sea charts, waggoners, epitomes, kallenders, marine compasses, Davis's quadrants, gunter scales, and dividers, paper, sealing wax and wafers, nutmegs, mace, cloves, cinnamon, &c.[55]

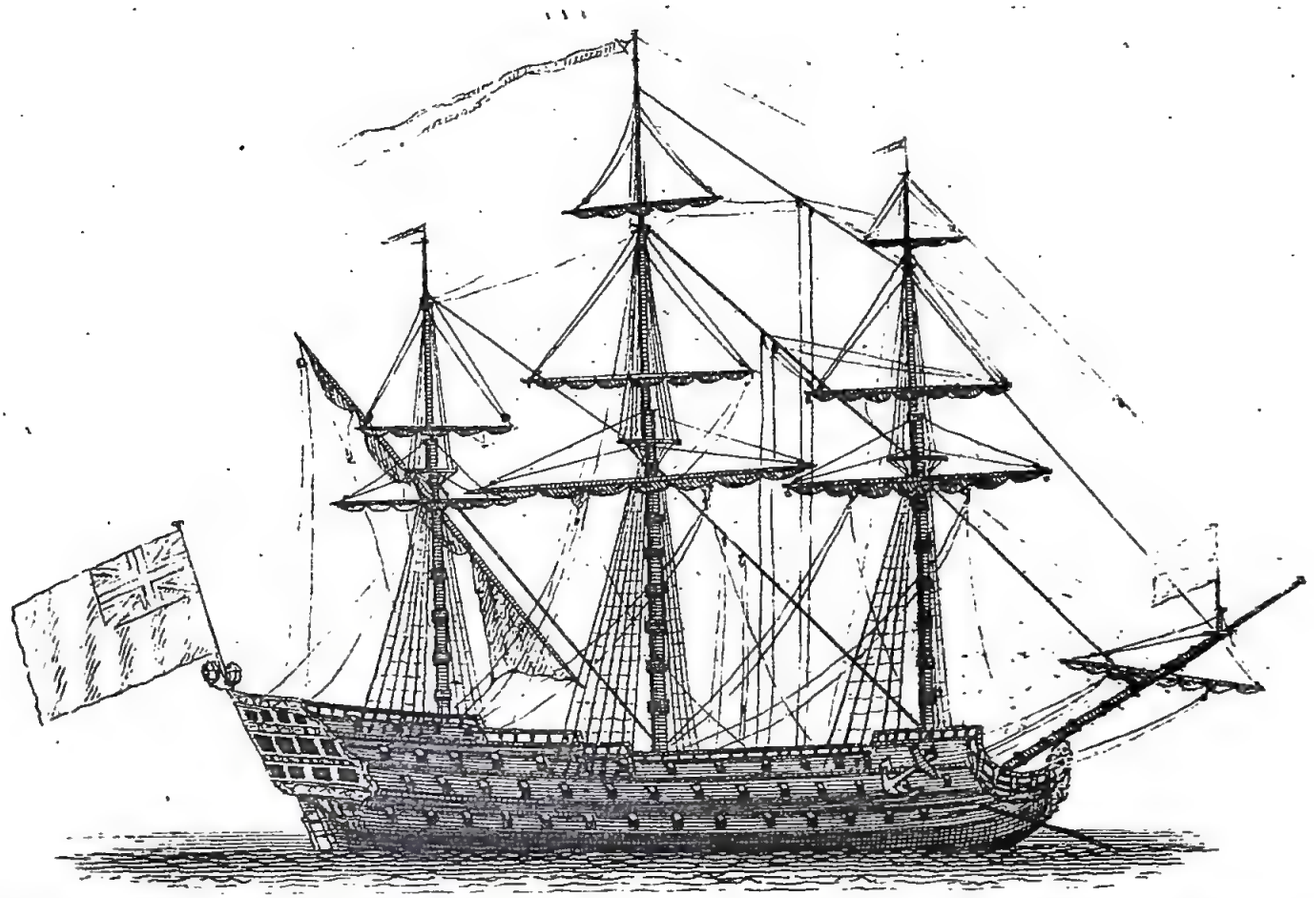
Vessels carried passengers as well as goods and must have had cabins or berths to accommodate them. The *Pennsylvania Gazette* advertised space aboard the *Dolphin:*

> The Brigantine *Dolphin*, William Hill, Master now lying at Carpenter's Wharff, being well accommodated for Passengers, and having three Fourths of her Lading engaged, will sail by the Tenth of July next. For Freight or Passage agree with John Beard, or said Master in Front Street.[56]

The *Gazette* also announced the arrival of a large group of passengers: "Since our last the Ship *Hannah*, Captain Mitchell, arrived here from Londonderry with

55. *Pennsylvania Gazette*, 31 May 1750.

56. *Pennsylvania Gazette*, 1-8 July 1731.



A ship of war, from Thomas Blanckley's 1750 *A Naval Expositor*. Photo courtesy of the Library Company of Philadelphia.

upwards of 500 passengers."[57] Such a large number of passengers must have spent the voyage in the hold in considerable discomfort.

The six main types of vessels used to carry these diverse cargoes were ships, snows, brigs and brigantines, schooners, sloops and shallops. Since no firsthand descriptions have been located, it is necessary to look to other sources to determine the characteristics of these vessel types. Most merchants of the period were familiar with the types of vessels and their probable cargo capacities, and this familiarity may account for the lack of specific information on the subject. The only records which shed some light on the various types of vessels are the Port Registers for the City of Philadelphia. Any decked vessels engaged in coastwise or overseas trade had to be registered with the local authorities. The name of the vessel, the type, the number of and names of the owners, where the vessel was built, and its tons burden were recorded, and a copy of the information was forwarded to London, where it was incorporated into a master register of British vessels.[58] Quantification of the figures from these records combined with pictorial evidence suggests some general conclusions about each of the types of vessels.

Of all the merchant vessels, the largest were the ships. Falconer commented that the term ship was used generally for all vessels, as it still is today, but to the mariner it had a more specific meaning:

> In sea-language, however, it is more particularly applied to each vessel furnished with three masts, each of which is composed of a lower mast, top-mast, top-gallant-mast, with the usual machinery thereto belonging.

Blanckley's illustration of a ship of war (above) shows more clearly the rigging configuration of a ship. The mizzen mast carries a lateen-rigged sail in addition to the square yard, the bowsprit is rigged for a sprit-sail, and the hull is square sterned. This type frequently appeared on the Delaware River. As early as 1720, Peter Cooper illustrated five ships lying before the city in "The South East Prospect of the City of Philadelphia" (see page 158).

57. *Pennsylvania Gazette*, 4 August 1773.

58. William A. Baker, *Sloops and Shallops* (Barre, MA: Barre Publishing Company, 1966), 62-63.

It is interesting to note that one has been partially rigged down and sheer legs are on deck in order to raise or lower the mainmast. George Wood's 1735 watercolor, "The Prospect of Philadelphia from Wicksawe" shows two ships, one at anchor and another under sail making its way up the river. Before the city proper, a forest of masts crowds the harbor (see page 153).

Scull and Heap's "East Prospect of the City of Philadelphia," 1754, shows five such vessels. One is at anchor rigged down, while eleven are partially rigged alongside the wharfs of the city's waterfront. Of the remaining five, two are at anchor drying their sails and two are under sail. Two armed vessels are shown in the foreground of one of the plates, one flying the East India Company flag at her stern (see pages 150-151). In 1758 an Act of Assembly ordered the collection of tonnage duty for "supporting and maintaining the Provincial Ship of war, for protecting the Trade of this Province, and other Purposes for His Majesty's Service."[58] Previous to this, His Majesty's ships must certainly have come into the port for provisioning. Joshua Fisher also depicted a ship on his 1756 chart of the Delaware Bay. Here, the ship under full sail heads up the main ship channel.

Scull and Heap's later view of Philadelphia of 1756 shows three ships. The one farthest to the left is a square-sterned ship unloading cargo into a small boat tied alongside. Another ship with eight gunports is sailing towards a ship at anchor, her crew on deck (page 153). The anchored vessel is pink-sterned, a term Falconer defines as "... a name given to a ship with a very narrow stern." Other vessels besides ships were pink-sterned, including sloops and brigantines. Unlike the earlier Scull and Heap view, this one shows no unusual vessels along the wharves.

The 1761 version of the "East Prospect" again shows an empty waterfront. It depicts five ships, all at anchor except one, and another seems to have just fired a broadside shot from its gundeck. All these appear to be square-sterned (see page 154). The Carlisen Biddle map of 1762 (page 154) shows four ships in the Delaware River, three under sail and one at anchor, while a 1774 map by John Reed shows four ships clustered at the foot of Arch Street and six others, most of which lie at the wharves.

An elevation of the *Lord Camden*, built at Philadelphia in 1775, shows the profile of the hull of a cargo carrier. This 295-ton vessel of rather considerable size, was ninety-six feet six inches on her lower deck and twenty-seven feet nine inches beam. Her hold depth was twelve feet three and a half inches. In contrast, the tonnages of some British ships listed in Mungo Murray's 1765 *Supplement to a Treatise on Ship-building* ra... from 130 to 182, the length on lower deck from ... seven feet four inches to eighty-one feet eight inches, ... the breadth from twenty-one feet two and a half inch... twenty-three feet two inches.[60] The length varied ... often, with a resulting increase or decrease in tonnage. ... are of at least a 3:1 ratio of beam to length, in accord ... eighteenth-century vessel design ideas.

The vessel registers of the port of Philadelphia ... some idea of the tonnage of ships entering or clearing ... port as well as some indication of ownership patterns (... Appendix A, page 166). Between the years 1726 ... 1774, the port saw a marked increase in the number ... ships in use, rising from three in 1726 to thirty-two ... 1774. Moreover, the average tonnage for a ship almost doubled during the same period, averaging seventy tons early on, and 147 tons at the end of the period. Of those registered, 60 to 80 percent were Philadelphia built, but in general those with the largest tonnages were built in England. Of the types built in Philadelphia, the ship was one of the favorites. Philadelphia ownership also increased during the period. Ships frequently had as many as five owners. This pattern of shared ownership reflects the large outlay of capital needed to build a vessel of such size; the risk would have been less if divided among several owners. An inventory of 1725 lists "Seven Eight part of Ship *Lovely* £525-0-0-," indicating that the entire vessel would be valued at £603.[61] Thomas Lloyd's estate of 1754 listed the "¼ part of the Ship *American* . . . £250" making the total worth £1,000.[62] By 1762 the value of ships had increased dramatically. An insurance policy for the ship *Mercury* listed it at £1,800.[63] One merchant who experienced trouble fitting out a vessel advised the owners to "sell a share of the ship" to help ease the financial burden. Unfortunately, the records do not give tonnage figures for the vessels listed, but the information does provide an idea of the capital required for ownership of a large vessel.

Some information regarding crew size comes from lists of ships' passes issued from Philadelphia and from some Custom House records as well. Ships of 100 to 140 tons usually sailed with a complement of nine to twelve men. One vessel of 190 tons had a crew of sixteen. A ship of 140 tons with four guns had a crew of fifteen, as extra hands were needed to man the guns if attacked. Whatever the size of the crew, the records indicate a ratio of 4:1 English to foreign crew members. Ships of sixty to

59. *Acts of Assembly*, 14 October 1757 - 29 September 1758, 267, IAC.

60. Murray, *Supplement to the Treatise on Ship-building*, 106-109.

61. *Philadelphia Probate Wills and Inventories*, 12 December 1725, 43, IAC.

62. Ibid., 1754, 100.

63. Insurance Policy, Ship *Mercury*, 27 November 1762, Society Miscellaneous Collections, Box 12A.

seventy-five tons usually managed with eight to ten crew members.[64] One portage bill, or account of the crews' wages,[65] for the ship *Elizabeth & Mary* for 20-25 December 1762 contained the following roster of crewmen: "Master, 1st Mate, 1 [one] Mate, Bosan, Cooper, Seamen 8, Carpenter, Boy, Cook, Landman." The crew totalled seventeen in all, indicating a ship of considerable size.[66]

Second in size but not in popularity to the ship was the snow. Falconer described the snow as:

> . . . generally the largest of all two-masted vessels employed by Europeans, and the most convenient for navigation.
>
> The sails and rigging on the main-mast and fore-mast of a snow, are exactly similar to those on the same masts in a ship only that there is a small mast behind the main-mast of the former, which carries a sail nearly resembling the mizen of a ship. The foot of this mast is fixed in a block of wood on the quarter-deck abaft the mainmast; and the head is attached to the after-part of the main-top. The sail, which is called the try-sail, is extended from its mast towards the stern of the vessel.[67]

This try-sail was loose-footed and had no boom. The snow, which Falconer contends was the most convenient type of vessel for navigation, does not seem to have caught on in Philadelphia waters. Although depicted in the 1720 Peter Cooper view (page 158), the type does not appear again until the 1756 "East Prospect" (page 153) and then the 1762 Clarkson/Biddle map (page 154). A 1773 advertisement for the snow *Pen* shows that snows did voyage to Philadelphia, although the woodcut is of a ship rather than a snow. There are none in the 1774 John Reed map. The snows depicted appear as square-sterned vessels. Mungo Murray supplies some statistics on two English snows: one was 131 tons, with a length on the lower deck of seventy-three feet, three inches and an extreme breadth of twenty-one feet, one inch, while the second measured 130 tons, seventy-one feet, four inches in length, and twenty-one feet in extreme breadth.[68] Again, there is a 3:1 ratio of length to beam.

The port registers reflect the lack of popularity of the snow type in Philadelphia waters. They averaged from forty-three tons, again generally increasing in size throughout the eighteenth century (see Appendix A, page 166). Very few snows were built in Philadelphia except in 1750, when twelve were built. Again, ownership was divided among several people, usually one to three or four owners, the majority of whom were Philadelphians. Unfortunately, the sources do not indicate the cost of building or owning this type of vessel. They do suggest, however, that seven to nine men could handle these vessels of fifty to seventy tons.[69] One snow of eighty tons with four guns required a crew of ten.[70]

Of all the larger two-masted vessels, the brigantine and brig are the most confusing. For one thing, brigantine was often abbreviated as *brig* or *brgt.* or *brg.*, completely confusing the record. Falconer listed the terms brig and brigantine as one and commented that in different countries the word took on different meanings. He said, however, that:

> Amongst the English seamen, this vessel is distinguished by having her mainsail set nearly in the plane of her keel; whereas the main-sails of large ships are hung athwart, or at right angles with the ship's length, and fastened to a yard which hangs parallel to the deck: but in a brig, the fore-mast edge of the main-sail is fastened in different places to hoops which encircle the main-mast, and slide up and down it as the sail is hoisted or lowered: it is extended by a gaff above, and a boom below.[71]

The brig or brigantine, like the snow, is not often depicted in the views of Philadelphia. A pink-sterned brigantine appears in the 1754 "East Prospect" and is missing the square yard on the main (pages 150-151). One appears on the Fisher chart, and another in the 1761 "East Prospect" is rather sketchily drawn. Two are very nicely shown on the Clarkson/Biddle map (page 154), and the John Reed map also depicts such a vessel.

The confusion surrounding this type extends to the vessel registers. No brigs were listed in 1726, 1730, 1738, 1742, 1746, 1754, 1770, and 1774. Only one or two were recorded in 1736 and 1750, and 1762 and 1766 list fourteen and ten, respectively. The records for 1762 are particularly unreliable. The British were fighting the French at this time, and many vessels traveled in convoy; consequently, large numbers of English vessels were entering and leaving the port. Of the brigs listed, most appear to have been between forty and one hundred tons and averaged in the forty- to fifty-eight-ton range.

64. "A List of Ships Passes 1750-1753," Society Miscellaneous Collection, Box 13 A; Custom House Papers, vol. 1 (July 1750-1761), 5, 20, 32, 36, 39, and vol. 2 (November 1761-October 1764), 96, 183, 194, 202, 208, 211, 228.

65. Gershom Bradford, *The Mariner's Dictionary* (Barre, MA: Barre Publishing Company, 1972), 200.

66. "Boats and Cargoes 1711-1799," Portage Bill, Ship *Elizabeth and Mary*, 20-25 December 1762, Society Miscellaneous Collections, Box 13A, f.1.

67. Falconer, *An Universal Dictionary of the Marine.*

68. Murray, *Supplement to the Treatise on Ship-Building*, 106-109.

69. "A List of Ships Passes 1750-1753," Society Miscellaneous Collections, Box 13A.

70. Custom House Papers, Philadelphia, vol. 1, July 1750-October 1761.

71. Falconer, *An Universal Dictionary of the Marine.*

The records on the brigantine are a little more enlightening. Certainly the increase in number from three in 1726 to thirty-nine in 1774 is significant. However, the average tonnage of the brigantine seems to have remained fairly constant throughout the period, usually falling in the mid-fifty-ton range, although some as large as 156 tons were built by the end of the period. Philadelphians built and owned the majority of these, and again ownership was shared among one to five people (see Appendix A, page 167). Next to ships, brigantines were the most popular vessels built at Philadelphia shipyards (see Appendix B, pages 170-176).

An inventory of 1725 valued "half of Brigantine *Slope* £175" and "one half Briganteen *Cutwater*" at the same amount, making each vessel worth £350.[72] Richard Clymer's inventory listed partial shares in two brigantines, one of which was worth £800 and the other £706.[73] The inventory of Abell Cain, a mariner, listed "¼ part of the Brig *Unity*" at £400, a total value for the vessel of £1,600 in 1738.[74] In 1754 the Reaf and Penmak estate listed "Cash for Brigg *Princess* Sold at Vendue £190," which seems to be a rather low figure, but perhaps she was a very small vessel or in poor condition.[75]

As far as crew size is concerned, brigantines of forty to sixty tons during the period had crews of six to eight men, and brigs of forty to fifty tons had crews of seven to eight men.[76] A one-hundred-ton brigantine *Moncklon* was bound for Cadiz from Philadelphia with a crew of nine, seven of whom were English subjects and two of whom were "strangers."[77] As on other vessels, crew size increased when guns were carried in order to have sufficient hands to load and operate the guns. A brigantine of fifty tons with six guns and one of seventy tons with four guns each had a crew of twelve men.[78]

A portage bill of 1770 for the brigantine *Dove*, which sailed from Philadelphia to Madeira and returned to Philadelphia, set out the monthly wages to be paid to each member of the crew of six: The captain received £7 and the mate £5; two able seamen earned £3 2s 6d while a third earned £3 3s 6d; an orderly (owner's servant) received £1 5s.[79] Thus, a month at sea would have cost well over £23 for the crew's wages alone.

72. *Philadelphia Probate Wills and Inventories*, 12 December 1725, 43, IAC.

73. Ibid., Richard Clymer, 8 July 1734, 474.

74. Ibid., 6 December 1738, 417.

75. Ibid., Reaf and Penmak Estate, July 1754.

76. "A List of Ships Passes 1750-1753," Society Miscellaneous Collections, Box 13A.

77. Custom House Papers, Philadelphia, 29 March 1764, 105.

78. Ibid., vol. 2 (November 1761-October 1764), 96, 183, 194, 202, 208, 211, 228.

79. Portage Bill, Brigtn. *Dove*, 1770, Society Miscellaneous Collections, Box 13.

The smaller of the decked-over, cargo-carrying vessels were of three main types — the schooner, the sloop, and the shallop. The schooner first appeared in the colonies in New England about 1716. This two-masted, fore-and-aft sailing vessel, with the main-mast usually taller than the fore, was easier to handle than a square-rigged vessel and required fewer crew members. To handle the sails, crewmen used halyards to pull up the gaffs on deck without sending men aloft. Falconer is again helpful in characterizing this type:

> . . . a small vessel with two masts, whose main-sail and fore-sail are suspended from gaffs reaching from the mast towards the stern; and stretched out below by booms, whose foremost ends are hooked to an iron, which clasps the mast so as to turn therein as upon an axis, when the afterends are swung from one side of the vessel to the other.

Although the schooner appeared in the port registers of Philadelphia by 1726, it is not depicted until 1762 in the Clarkson/Biddle map (page 154). One quite large schooner is shown with yards on each mast for top-sails while another sails without them. The John Reed map depicts one as well.

Correspondence between Philadelphia merchants and English investors reveals that the latter commissioned vessels to be built in colonial Philadelphia. The schooner *Lively*, for example, was built for a little over £200 and loaded with a cargo of flour. In this particular case, the captain rather than the merchant was responsible for having the vessel constructed, and it is apparent that her new owners found the investment too expensive:

> You some Time ago wrote that the Schooner *Lively* was a very dear Vessel that you thought she and her Cargo of Super fine Flower &c. would amount to no more than £4 or £500 Sterl. the sum you first ordered in my favr.; can you require an answer to this calculation? will you not rather acknowledge you were mistaken? but permit me to say that the Schooner *Lively* was not to the best of my knowledge dearer than any other new Vessel purchased by this Place at that Time. I am under no Temptation to say this for purchasing, or filling her was no act of mine, but Capt. Davidson's, who alone was Authorised, as the Cargo it was bought to best advantage, for in that as in every other act . . . concerning you, your Interest, has been consulted to the utmost exercise of my Judgement.[80]

An earlier inventory of 1725 listed the "scooner *Philadelphia*" at £85,[81] whereas a 1766 insurance policy

80. *Roberdeau Accounts*, November 1765, 72, 21 October 1764, 35, 18 May 1765, 57-58, 29 July 1767, 139-140, IAC.

81. *Philadelphia Probate Wills and Inventories*, 12 December 1725, 43, IAC.

listed a schooner valued at £500.[82] Although the sizes of the vessels were not given, it is clear that the size and price for schooners increased considerably over the forty-one-year period.

That schooners increased in number is apparent from the registers. Only one was listed in 1726, but the 1774 records list twenty-five. Schooners also increased in size, almost doubling in average tonnage during the period. Those listed ranged in size from two to seventy tons. However, very few were built in Philadelphia. The majority were purchased from small shipyards in southern New Jersey or Delaware, where they were used predominantly in the shallower creeks and marshes. This is true for sloops as well. Schooners were usually owned by one to three people, one of whom was often the master of the vessel (see Appendix A, page 168).

Crews for schooners of twenty-five to thirty-five tons consisted of five to six men.[83] The schooner *Young Nancy*, which sailed from Philadelphia to St. Estatia and Tortola then returned to Philadelphia, may have been of a slightly larger size as she sailed with a crew of seven, including a master, a mate, and five seamen, two of whom were "negromen."[84] Larger crews may also have been carried in order to thwart pirates who hid among the islands.

Sloops were undeniably the most popular of the smaller decked vessels. The sloop was a single-masted vessel rigged with a fore-and-aft mainsail, fore staysail, jib, and sometimes a square topsail for other than river work. They could be square or pink-sterned. Falconer described the sloop as:

> . . . a small vessel furnished with one mast, the mainsail of which is attached to a gaff above, to the mast on its foremost edge, and to a long boom below; by which it is occassionally shifted to either quarter.

Sloops must have had a small cabin to house the crew. In 1739 a man was imprisoned for four months for breaking open the cabin on the sloop *William*.[85]

A sloop's fore-and-aft rig made her very manageable for a small crew, and perhaps that is why sloops were so frequently seen plying the river as well as traveling up and down the coast, to the Indies, and even making transatlantic voyages. However, the newspapers frequently contained accounts of sloops in trouble. The *Pennsylvania Gazette* reported one such disaster on 19 February 1730:

> We have an Account by way of N-Y, That the sloop *Morning Star*, Evan Bevan Master, which sail'd from this Place [Philadelphia] in October last for Barbadoes, founder'd at Sea in fair Weather. The People sav'd themselves in the Boat, and arriv'd at Antigua in about 3 Days. The sloop sunk presently after they left her.[86]

Sloops were in use in colonial Philadelphia quite early in the eighteenth century. Peter Cooper depicted several (page 158), and George Wood depicted one very large top-sail sloop with opening gunports (page 153). Scull and Heap's 1754 "East Prospect" shows several under sail, more tied along the wharves, and one Dutch sloop (pages 150-151). The Dutch settled in the region even before the English and certainly would have used these double-ended craft with leeboards and small cabins. The leeboards, which were raised or lowered depending on which tack the vessel was sailing, would have been ideal for the very shallow waters of the tributaries of the Delaware River such as the Maurice and Cohansey Rivers or even the Brandywine.

The later versions of the "East Prospect" show the continued use of the sloop type. In the 1756 version, in fact, the river seems almost exclusively plied by sloops. Again, one Dutch sloop appears. One sloop has no boom on the main, but rather is loose-footed similar to one in an earlier view (see page 153). If the mast of the vessel were set far enough forward, the mainsail could be sheeted into the stern quarters. Where a deck load was carried on a vessel that made frequent trips on small rivers or creeks, this loose-footed sail would have been of particular advantage and would have kept the cost of spars down as well. Only two sloops appear in the 1761 "East Prospect." However, both a top-sail sloop and two others appear on the Clarkson/Biddle map (see page 154), and at least ten appear on the John Reed map. Joshua Fisher also included one on his chart, heading up the "New England Channel."

Mungo Murray listed two English sloops, one of one hundred tons with a length on the lower deck of sixty-one feet and an extreme breadth of twenty feet, and another of eighty-three tons with a length on lower deck of fifty-seven feet, two inches and an extreme breadth of eighteen feet, nine inches.[87]

Philadelphia's port registers, however, show a smaller average size of sloops. They could be as small as eight tons or as large as seventy, but they were generally in the mid-twenty-ton range. Between 1726 and 1774, the number in use quadrupled from six to twenty-four. Like the schooner, many were built on the backwaters of southern New Jersey and Delaware, and the ownership pattern was similar as well (see Appendix A, page 168).

82. Insurance Policy, Schooner *Rachel*, 30 April 1766, Society Miscellaneous Collections, Box 12A.

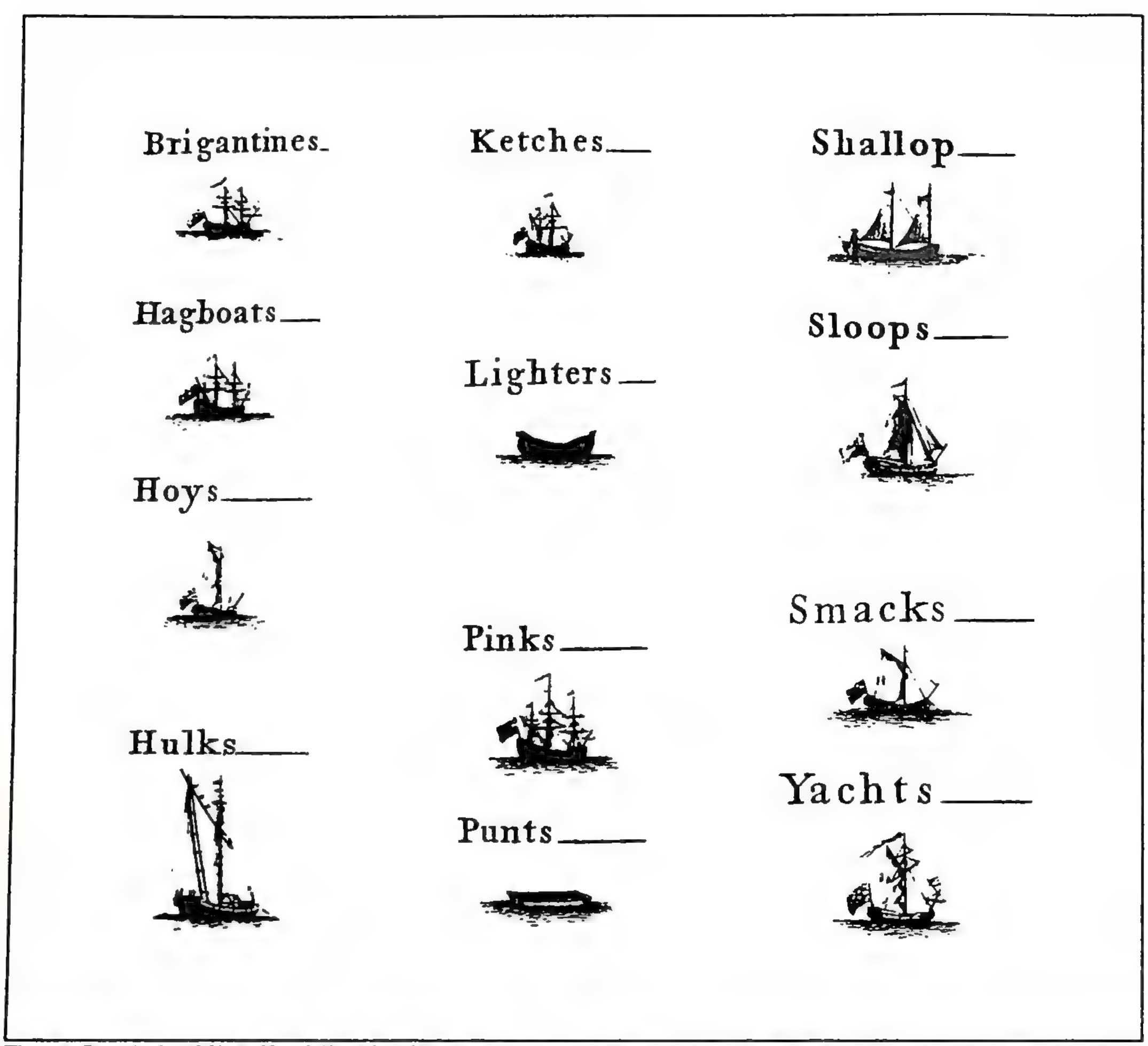
83. "A List of Ships Passes 1750-1753," Society Miscellaneous Collections, Box 13A; Custom House Papers, Philadelphia, vol. 1, July 1750-October 1761.

84. Portage Bill, Schooner *Young Nancy*, 27 December 1764, Society Miscellaneous Collections, Box 13A, f.1.

85. *Court Records*, July 1739, 63, IAC.

86. *Pennsylvania Gazette*, 19 February 1730.

87. Murray, *Supplement to the Treatise on Ship-Building*, 106-109.



Thomas Blankley's 1750 *A Naval Expositor* illustrated many of the types of larger decked vessels that frequented colonial Philadelphia's port. Photo courtesy of the Library Company of Philadelphia.

Because of their small size, sloops were quite cheap to own and operate. The sloop *John* was appraised with "Her Guns, Tackle, Apparrell, and Furniture" for £320 in 1763.[88] A sloop of twelve tons carried as few as four men, and one of twenty tons had a crew of five. Larger sloops of thirty to fifty tons required eight to ten men.[89] Although not documented, this increase in crew size may be explained by the use of a square topsail with its complicated rigging requirements. Certainly, living quarters aboard must have been quite cramped and uncomfortable, although these small vessels may have put ashore more frequently. Because of their small size and smaller tonnage, sloops rarely made long voyages. Additional crew were probably also carried for loading and offloading cargoes, as sloops worked from isolated areas along smaller creeks and rivers.

Falconer gives us some clues about the shallop. This is the most elusive of all the vessel types, and information about it is varied and conflicting. Falconer said that

88. Custom House Papers, Philadelphia, vol. 2 (November 1761-October 1764), 3 November 1763, Sloop *John*.

89. Custom House Papers, Philadelphia, vol. 2 (July 1750-October 1761), vol. 2 (November 1761-October 1764); "A List of Ships Passes 1750-1753," Society Miscellaneous Collection, Box 13A.

shallops were ". . . a sort of boat with two masts, and usually riged like a schooner." They were listed in the port registers at least until 1746; however, port registers only listed vessels that were decked over. In 1752, those trading locally were exempted from paying customs fees and this may account for their sudden absence from the registers:

> Provided always, That no Shallop or Boat, passing between this Province and the Province of New-Jersey, or the Three Lower Counties of New-Castle, Kent and Suffix, on Delaware, shall be liable to pay any Reward for entering or clearing, and that one general Permit for all Goods on board such Shallops or Boats, to be taken from the Master's Report, shall be sufficient.[90]

Some shallops may have had a small cabin to protect the crew from the elements. The *Pennsylvania Gazette* noted that: "Last Saturday Morning one Alexander Fortescue was found dead in his Bed on board a Shallop."[91]

According to Falconer, shallops were "riged like a schooner," meaning fore-and-aft, yet it would seem this was not always the case. Other maritime historians have suggested that shallops were used extensively in Europe and developed from two-masted square-rigged Cornish fishing boats.[92] They were heavily built, double ended, could be either rowed or sailed, and had a variety of possible rigs.

Certainly the views of Philadelphia illustrate a number of vessels which could have been shallops. The Scull and Heap view (1754) shows several small two-masted fore-and-aft-rigged vessels with lateen sails which may have been considered shallops or small schooners. The 1754 view also depicts a small double-ended boat being rowed by one man and three other single-masted vessels, two having lateen sails and one a square sail (pages 150-151). These may also have fallen into the shallop category.

To confuse the issue further, Joshua Fisher's drawing of the Delaware Bay and River shows a channel labeled "Westernmost Channel used only by Shallops." He has drawn a two-masted, fore-and-aft rigged vessel with gaffs, and the mainmast higher than the fore, which according to Falconer was considered a schooner. Thus, what is really a shallop and what is not is terribly clouded.

The 1756 "East Prospect" shows a vessel which more than likely may be considered a shallop, double ended yet again with a single mast and square sail (see page 153). The later 1761 version shows two vessels very similar to this; both are two-masted with square sails (see page 154). These are indeed similar to the Cornish fishing boats of over a century earlier. Again, the Clarkson/Biddle map (page 154) shows a two-masted vessel with lateen sails much like that in the 1754 "East Prospect." What truly characterized a shallop of this period remains in doubt.

Two contemporary inventories list shallops valued at £70 and £93,[93] a rather small capital investment when compared to other vessels. The port registers suggest that shallops were as small as four tons and as large as twenty-eight but usually fell in the mid-teen range. Very few were built in Philadelphia, and by 1750 the type had disappeared from the registers altogether.

One advertisement, however, does give some additional information on the dimensions for a shallop:

> To be sold, A Commodious new Shallop, 36 Feet Keel, 16 Feet and a half Beam, well fitted for the River Service, most of her lower Timbers, and many of her top Timbers, are Mulberry; she is well built, and a prime Sailer. Any Person inclining to purchase, may have half a Year or Twelve Month's Credit, paying Interest and giving Security, if required. For farther Particulars inquire of James James, living in Second-street, near Chestnut-street.[94]

Conclusions

Over the half-century between 1725 and 1775, Philadelphia's harbor became increasingly busy and Philadelphians saw a variety of vessels in use. Many were involved in long-distance trade, but numerous small craft were used to transport people and goods locally and were built by local boatbuilders.

By 1772, Philadelphia was a major shipbuilding port. Tax records list seventy-four shipwrights, nineteen sailmakers, and numerous rope and mastmakers, caulkers, and block makers.[95] Located near the waterfront, these trades had to meet the needs of the ever-increasing numbers of vessels entering and clearing the port. Philadelphia's shipbuilders concentrated on constructing the larger types of decked vessels, which increased steadily in cargo-carrying capacity during the period. They left the building of smaller types such as sloops and schooners to the smaller yards in New Jersey and Delaware. The records show that shipbuilders of Penn's colony embraced new design practices as the demand for larger vessels increased and as merchants became aware of the money-saving possibilities of new rigs like the brigantine. The illustrations of the port of Philadelphia, along with the port registers and tax records, reflect an increasingly busy and crowded eighteenth-century harbor visited by a wide variety of contemporary vessel types.

90. *Acts of Assembly*, 1752, 247, IAC.
91. *Pennsylvania Gazette*, 15 December 1730.
92. Baker, *Sloops and Shallops*, 20-37.
93. *Philadelphia Probate Wills and Inventories*, no. 512, April 1734, IAC.
94. *Pennsylvania Gazette*, 29 March 1764.
95. *Province Tax Records*, 1772, 118-119, IAC.

Appendix A
Vessel Types

For the period of 1726 to 1774, every four years each type was quantified in order to determine if any clear pattern of tonnage, building site, or ownership developed. The year 1736 was substituted for 1734 because so much of the information for the latter year was unknown. The year 1762 also presented some problems as the chart indicates. England was at war with France at this time, and many British ships traveled in convoy for protection. This would account for the sudden rise in numbers of each of the six types (except the shallop) for that year and the postwar slump in the years immediately following.

The data in the appendices was derived from *Ships Registered in the Port of Philadelphia before 1776 - A Computerized Listing* by John J. McCusker, 1970, Manuscript Room, The Historical Society of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

Type of Vessel: SHIP

Year	1726	1730	1736	1738	1742	1746	1750	1754	1758	1762	1766	1770	1774
# of type	3	6	9	13	13	6	18	11	13	19	16	24	32
Total tons carried	210	350	795	1176	1325	580	1650	1200	1445	2180	1710	2879	4710
Average tons carried	70	58	88	90	102	97	92	109	111	115	107	120	147
Range of tonnage	50-100	50-80	50-130	50-150	50-200	70-130	50-150	50-190	60-200	60-300	75-150	64-280	60-250
# built in Philadelphia	3	5	6	8	11	3	14	11	9	4	12	15	26
% of total built in Philadelphia	100	83	67	62	85	50	78	100	69	21	75	63	81
# built other than Philadelphia	—	1	3	5	2	3	4	—	4	15*	4	9	6
% built other than Philadelphia	—	17	33	38	15	50	22	—	31	79	25	37	19
# of Philadelphia owners	1	12	8	21	16	11	31	20	23	3	29	39	60
% of total Philadelphia owners	14	40	34	47	64	79	69	77	62	13	71	62	73
# of owners other than Philadelphia	6	17	15	24	9	3	14	6	14	21*	12	24	22
% of owners other than Philadelphia	86	60	66	53	36	21	31	23	38	87	29	38	27
Range of # of owners	1-3	2-10	1-5	1-9	1-4	2-4	1-5	1-5	1-7	1-4	1-5	1-7	1-5

* majority unknown

Type of Vessel: SNOW

Year	1726	1730	1736	1738	1742	1746	1750	1754	1758	1762	1766	1770	1774
# of type	2	3	6	8	4	5	15	4	7‡	5	3	7	1
Total tons carried	110	130	320	460	295	375	1030	348	435	335	240	600	60
Average tons carried	55	43	53	58	74	75	69	87	62	67	80	86	60
Range of tonnage	40-70	30-60	40-70	40-80	60-90	20-140	40-100	50-138	30-100	40-85	70-90	50-150	60
# built in Philadelphia	2	2	3	4	—	1	12	3	—	—	2	5	—
% of total built in Philadelphia	100	67	50	50	—	20	80	75	—	—	67	71	—
# built other than Philadelphia	—	1	3	4	4	4	3	1	7	5*	1	2	1
% built other than Philadelphia	—	33	50	50	100	80	20	25	100	100	33	29	100
# of Philadelphia owners	4	2	8	8	9	6	17	8	12	—	3	13	2
% of total Philadelphia owners	80	29	73	44	90	55	47	89	71	—	75	87	100
# of owners other than Philadelphia	1	5	3	10	1	5	19	1	5	5*	1	2	—
% of owners other than Philadelphia	20	71	27	56	10	45	53	11	29	100	25	13	—
Range of # of owners	1-4	1-4	1-3	1-3	2-3	1-4	1-6	1-3	1-6	1	1-2	1-4	2

‡four of the seven listed were taken as prizes * all unknown

Type of Vessel: BRIG

Year	1726	1730	1736	1738	1742	1746	1750	1754	1758	1762	1766	1770	1774
# of type	—	—	1	—	—	—	2	—	1	14	10	—	—
Total tons carried	—	—	13	—	—	—	80	—	20	790	575	—	—
Average tons carried	—	—	13	—	—	—	40	—	20	56	58	—	—
Range of tonnage	—	—	13	—	—	—	40	—	20	40-100	40-100	—	—
# built in Philadelphia	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	—	—	3	5	—	—
% of total built in Philadelphia	—	—	—	—	—	—	100	—	—	21	50	—	—
# built other than Philadelphia	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	1	11*	5	—	—
% built other than Philadelphia	—	—	100	—	—	—	—	—	100	79	50	—	—
# of Philadelphia owners	—	—	1	—	—	—	6	—	3	4	20	—	—
% of total Philadelphia owners	—	—	100	—	—	—	86	—	100	25	71	—	—
# of owners other than Philadelphia	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	12*	8	—	—
% of owners other than Philadelphia	—	—	—	—	—	—	14	—	—	75	29	—	—
Range of # of owners	—	—	1	—	—	—	3-4	—	3	1-3	1-7	—	—

* majority unknown

Type of Vessel: BRIGANTINE

Year	1726	1730	1736	1738	1742	1746	1750	1754	1758	1762	1766	1770	1774
# of type	3	12	11	8	6	16	11	12	21	22	11	24	39
Total tons carried	165	535	490	375	340	840	625	602	1146	1155	555	1335	2506
Average tons carried	55	45	45	47	57	53	57	50	55	53	50	56	64
Range of tonnage	45-70	25-70	25-80	25-70	35-75	35-80	40-80	35-100	30-85	25-100	35-70	28-100	25-156
# built in Philadelphia	1	8	8	7	4	10	8	8	11	1	7	7	9
% of total built in Philadelphia	33	67	73	88	67	62	73	67	52	5	64	29	23
# built other than Philadelphia	2	4	3	1	2	6	3	4	10	21‡	4	17	30
% built other than Philadelphia	67	33	27	12	33	38	27	33	48	95	36	71	77
# of Philadelphia owners	—	17	11	11	9	36	18	20	40	4	17	38	58
% of total Philadelphia owners	—	60	61	69	100	84	72	83	77	17	77	72	77
# of owners other than Philadelphia	7	11	7	5	—	7	7	4	12	20*	5	15	17
% of owners other than Philadelphia	100	40	39	31	—	16	28	17	23	83	23	28	23
Range of # of owners	1-5	1-5	1-4	1-4	1-3	1-6	1-4	1-3	1-5	1-3	1-3	1-4	1-5

‡ majority unknown * all unknown

Type of Vessel: SCHOONER

Year	1726	1730	1736	1738	1742	1746	1750	1754	1758	1762	1766	1770	1774
# of type	1	4	3	2	6	5	7	4	16	20	22	12	25
Total tons carried	20	52	45	26	130	110	135	103	347	607	584	335	747
Average tons carried	20	13	15	13	22	22	19	26	22	30	27	28	30
Range of tonnage	20	10-20	8-25	2-24	8-40	10-30	8-25	8-60	7-60	5-70	5-60	12-50	10-55
# built in Philadelphia	—	2	1	1	6	—	1	1	3	1	3	2	5
% of total built in Philadelphia	—	50	33	50	100	—	14	25	19	5	14	17	20
# built other than Philadelphia	1	2	2	1	—	5	6	3	13	19‡	19	10	20
% built other than Philadelphia	100	50	67	50	—	100	86	75	81	95	86	83	80
# of Philadelphia owners	—	2	3	1	8	13	4	3	21	3	28	12	33
% of total Philadelphia owners	—	40	100	33	89	100	31	60	68	14	78	50	79
# of owners other than Philadelphia	2	3	—	2	1	—	9	2	10	18*	8	12	9
% of owners other than Philadelphia	100	60	—	67	11	—	69	40	32	86	22	50	21
Range of # of owners	2	1-2	1	1-2	1-2	1-5	1-3	1-2	1-5	1-2	1-3	1-3	1-3

‡ majority unknown * all unknown

Type of Vessel: SLOOP

Year	1726	1730	1736	1738	1742	1746	1750	1754	1758	1762	1766	1770	1774
# of type	6	12	20	14	7	13	18	20	11	39	23	20	24
Total tons carried	167	175	493	271	97	294	367	358	226	987	540	539	598
Average tons carried	28	15	25	19	14	23	20	18	21	25	23	27	25
Range of tonnage	20-40	10-40	10-60	8-60	10-25	14-40	8-40	8-30	6-50	8-60	8-45	10-70	10-50
# built in Philadelphia	3	4	11	2	3	4	6	1	2	—	6	1	4
% of total built in Philadelphia	50	33	55	14	43	31	33	5	18	—	26	5	17
# built other than Philadelphia	3	8	9	12	4	9	12	19	9	39*	17	19	20
% built other than Philadelphia	50	67	45	86	57	69	67	95	82	100	74	95	83
# of Philadelphia owners	9	6	21	3	8	25	6	15	6	3	24	16	22
% of total Philadelphia owners	60	33	66	9	67	80	16	45	38	7	57	43	50
# of owners other than Philadelphia	6	12	11	30	4	6	31	18	10	38*	18	21	22
% of owners other than Philadelphia	40	67	34	91	33	20	84	55	62	93	43	57	50
Range of # of owners	1-6	1-2	1-4	1-4	1-3	1-4	1-6	1-3	1-3	1-2	1-3	1-5	1-3

* all unknown

Type of Vessel: SHALLOP

Year	1726	1730	1736	1738	1742	1746	1750	1754	1758	1762	1766	1770	1774
# of type	—	12	2	3	4	3	—	—	1	—	—	—	—
Total tons carried	—	93	25	42	58	26	—	—	?	—	—	—	—
Average tons carried	—	8	13	14	15	9	—	—	?	—	—	—	—
Range of tonnage	—	4-10	7-18	10-20	10-28	6-10	—	—	?	—	—	—	—
# built in Philadelphia	—	3	1	1	—	1	—	—	1	—	—	—	—
% of total built in Philadelphia	—	25	50	33	—	33	—	—	100	—	—	—	—
# built other than Philadelphia	—	9	1	2	4	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
% built other than Philadelphia	—	75	50	67	100	67	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
# of Philadelphia owners	—	6	2	—	—	2	—	—	1	—	—	—	—
% of total Philadelphia owners	—	32	50	—	—	40	—	—	100	—	—	—	—
# of owners other than Philadelphia	—	13	2	4	9	3	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
% of owners other than Philadelphia	—	68	50	100	100	60	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Range of # of owners	—	1-3	2	1-2	2-3	1-3	—	—	—	—	—	—	—

? information not available

Type of Vessel: UNKNOWN (the only year of those surveyed listing vessels of unknown types was 1726)

Year	1726	1730	1736	1738	1742	1746	1750	1754	1758	1762	1766	1770	1774
# of type	10												
Total tons carried	530												
Average tons carried	53												
Range of tonnage	10-120												
# built in Philadelphia	10												
% of total built in Philadelphia	100												
# built other than Philadelphia	—												
% built other than Philadelphia	—												
# of Philadelphia owners													
% of total Philadelphia owners													
# of owners other than Philadelphia													
% of owners other than Philadelphia													
Range of # of owners													

All ownership information for these vessels was unavailable.

Appendix B
Vessel Types by Year

Year: 1726

Total Tons Carried for the Year: 1,202

Type of vessel	Brig	Brigantine	Schooner	Shallop	Ship	Sloop	Snow	Unknown	Total
# of type	0	3	1	0	3	6	2	10	25
Total tons carried	0	165	20	0	210	167	110	530	
Average tons of type	0	55	20	0	70	28	55	53	
Range of tonnage of type	0	45-70	20	0	50-100	20-40	40-70	10-120	
# built in Philadelphia	0	1	0	0	3	3	2	10	
% of total of type built in Philadelphia	0	33	0	0	100	50	100	100	
# built other than Philadelphia	0	2	1	0	0	3	0	0	
% of total built other than Philadelphia	0	67	100	0	0	50	0	0	
# of Philadelphia owners	0	0	0	0	1	9	4		
% of total Philadelphia owners	0	0	0	0	14	60	80		
# of owners other than Philadelphia	0	7	2	0	6	6	1		
% of total owners other than Philadelphia	0	100	100	0	86	40	20		
Range of # of owners	0	1-5	2	0	1-3	1-6	1-4		
% of total # of vessels	0	12	4	0	12	24	8	40	

Year: 1730

Total Tons Carried for the Year: 1,335

Type of vessel	Brig	Brigantine	Schooner	Shallop	Ship	Sloop	Snow	Total
# of type	0	12	4	12	6	12	3	49
Total tons carried	0	535	52	93	350	175	130	
Average tons of type	0	45	13	8	58	15	43	
Range of tonnage of type	0	25-70	10-20	4-10	50-80	10-20	30-60	
# built in Philadelphia	0	8	2	3	5	4	2	
% of total of type built in Philadelphia	0	67	50	25	83	33	67	
# built other than Philadelphia	0	4	2	9	1	8	1	
% of total built other than Philadelphia	0	33	50	75	17	67	33	
# of Philadelphia owners	0	17	2	6	12	6	2	
% of total Philadelphia owners	0	60	40	32	40	33	29	
# of owners other than Philadelphia	0	11	3	13	17	12	5	
% of total owners other than Philadelphia	0	40	60	68	60	67	71	
Range of # of owners	0	1-5	1-2	1-3	2-10	1-2	1-4	
% of total # of vessels	0	25	8	25	12	25	6	

Year: **1736**

Total Tons Carried for the Year: 2,181

Type of vessel	Brig	Brigantine	Schooner	Shallop	Ship	Sloop	Snow	Total
# of type	1	11	3	2	9	20	6	52
Total tons carried	13	490	45	25	795	493	320	
Average tons of type	13	45	15	13	88	25	53	
Range of tonnage of type	13	25-80	8-25	7-18	50-130	10-60	40-70	
# built in Philadelphia	0	8	1	1	6	11	3	
% of total of type built in Philadelphia	0	73	33	50	67	55	50	
# built other than Philadelphia	1	3	2	1	3	9	3	
% of total built other than Philadelphia	100	27	67	50	33	45	50	
# of Philadelphia owners	1	11	3	2	8	21	8	
% of total Philadelphia owners	100	61	100	50	34	66	73	
# of owners other than Philadelphia	0	7	0	2	15	11	3	
% of total owners other than Philadelphia	0	39	0	50	66	34	27	
Range of # of owners	1	1-4	1	2	1-5	1-4	1-3	
% of total # of vessels	2	21	6	4	17	39	12	

Year: **1738**

Total Tons Carried for the Year: 2,350

Type of vessel	Brig	Brigantine	Schooner	Shallop	Ship	Sloop	Snow	Total
# of type	0	8	2	3	13	14	8	48
Total tons carried	0	375	26	42	1176	271	460	
Average tons of each type	0	47	13	14	90	19	58	
Range of tonnage of type	0	25-70	2-24	10-20	50-150	8-60	40-80	
# built in Philadelphia	0	7	1	1	8	2	4	
% of total of type built in Philadelphia	0	88	50	33	62	14	50	
# built other than Philadelphia	0	1	1	2	5	12	4	
% of total built other than Philadelphia	0	12	50	67	38	86	50	
# of Philadelphia owners	0	11	1	0	21	3	8	
% of total Philadelphia owners	0	69	33	0	47	9	44	
# of owners other than Philadelphia	0	5	2	4	24	30	10	
% of total owners other than Philadelphia	0	31	67	100	53	91	56	
Range of # of owners	0	1-4	1-2	1-2	1-9	1-4	1-3	
% of total # of vessels	0	17	4	6	27	29	17	

Year: 1742 Total Tons Carried for the Year: 2,245

Type of vessel	Brig	Brigantine	Schooner	Shallop	Ship	Sloop	Snow	Total
# of type	0	6	6	4	13	7	4	40
Total tons carried	0	340	130	58	1325	97	295	
Average tons of each type	0	57	22	15	102	14	74	
Range of tonnage of type	0	35-75	8-40	10-28	50-200	10-25	60-90	
# built in Philadelphia	0	4	6	0	11	3	0	
% of total of type built in Philadelphia	0	67	100	0	85	43	0	
# built other than Philadelphia	0	2	0	4	2	4	4	
% of total built other than Philadelphia	0	33	0	100	15	57	100	
# of Philadelphia owners	0	9	8	0	16	8	9	
% of total Philadelphia owners	0	100	89	0	64	67	90	
# of owners other than Philadelphia	0	0	1	9	9	4	1	
% of total owners other than Philadelphia	0	0	11	100	36	33	10	
Range of # of owners	0	1-3	1-2	2-3	1-4	1-3	2-3	
% of total # of vessels	0	15	15	10	33	18	10	

Year: 1746 Total Tons Carried for the Year: 2,225

Type of vessel	Brig	Brigantine	Schooner	Shallop	Ship	Sloop	Snow	Total
# of type	0	16	5	3	6	13	5	48
Total tons carried	0	840	110	26	580	294	375	
Average tons of each type	0	53	22	9	97	23	75	
Range of tonnage of type	0	35-80	10-30	6-10	70-130	14-40	20-140	
# built in Philadelphia	0	10	0	1	3	4	1	
% of total of type built in Philadelphia	0	62	0	33	50	31	20	
# built other than Philadelphia	0	6	5	2	3	9	4	
% of total built other than Philadelphia	0	38	100	66	50	69	80	
# of Philadelphia owners	0	36	13	2	11	25	6	
% of total Philadelphia owners	0	84	100	40	79	80	55	
# of owners other than Philadelphia	0	7	0	3	3	6	5	
% of total owners other than Philadelphia	0	16	0	60	20	21	45	
Range of # of owners	0	1-6	1-5	1-2	2-4	1-4	1-4	
% of total # of vessels	0	33	10	6	13	27	10	

Year: 1750

Total Tons Carried for the Year: 3,887

Type of vessel	Brig	Brigantine	Schooner	Shallop	Ship	Sloop	Snow	Total
# of type	2	11	7	0	18	18	15	71
Total tons carried	80	625	135	0	1650	367	1030	
Average tons of each type	40	57	19	0	92	20	69	
Range of tonnage of type	40	40-80	8-25	0	50-150	8-40	40-100	
# built in Philadelphia	2	8	1	0	14	6	12	
% of total of type built in Philadelphia	100	73	14	0	78	33	80	
# built other than Philadelphia	0	3	6	0	4	12	3	
% of total built other than Philadelphia	0	27	86	0	22	67	20	
# of Philadelphia owners	6	18	4	0	31	6	17	
% of total Philadelphia owners	86	72	31	0	69	16	47	
# of owners other than Philadelphia	1	7	9	0	14	31	19	
% of total owners other than Philadelphia	14	28	69	0	31	84	53	
Range of # of owners	3-4	1-4	1-3	0	1-5	1-6	1-6	
% of total # of vessels	3	16	10	0	25	25	21	

Year: 1754

Total Tons Carried for the Year: 2,611

Type of vessel	Brig	Brigantine	Schooner	Shallop	Ship	Sloop	Snow	Total
# of type	0	12	4	0	11	20	4	51
Total tons carried	0	602	103	0	1200	358	348	
Average tons of each type	0	50	26	0	109	18	87	
Range of tonnage of type	0	35-100	8-60	0	50-190	8-30	50-138	
# built in Philadelphia	0	8	1	0	11	1	3	
% of total of type built in Philadelphia	0	67	25	0	100	5	75	
# built other than Philadelphia	0	4	3	0	0	19	1	
% of total built other than Philadelphia	0	33	75	0	0	95	25	
# of Philadelphia owners	0	20	3	0	20	15	8	
% of total Philadelphia owners	0	83	60	0	77	45	89	
# of owners other than Philadelphia	0	4	2	0	6	18	1	
% of total owners other than Philadelphia	0	17	40	0	23	55	11	
Range of # of owners	0	1-3	1-2	0	1-5	1-3	1-3	
% of total # of vessels	0	24	8	0	22	39	8	

Year: 1758 Total Tons Carried for the Year: 3,619

Type of vessel	Brig	Brigantine	Schooner	Shallop	Ship	Sloop	Snow	Total
# of type	1	21	16	1	13	11	7*	70
Total tons carried	20	1146	347	?	1445	226	435	
Average tons of each type	20	55	22	?	111	21	62	
Range of tonnage of type	20	30-85	7-60	?	60-200	6-50	30-100	
# built in Philadelphia	0	11	3	1	9	2	0	
% of total of type built in Philadelphia	0	52	19	100	69	18	0	
# built other than Philadelphia	1	10	13	0	4	9	7	
% of total built other than Philadelphia	100	48	81	0	31	82	100	
# of Philadelphia owners	3	40	21	1	23	6	12	
% of total Philadelphia owners	100	77	68	100	62	38	71	
# of owners other than Philadelphia	0	12	10	0	14	10	5	
% of total owners other than Philadelphia	0	23	32	0	38	62	29	
Range of # of owners	3	1-5	1-5	1	1-7	1-3	1-6	
% of total # of vessels	1	3	23	1	19	16	10	

*4 of 7 taken as prizes

Year: 1762 Total Tons Carried for the Year: 6,054

Type of vessel	Brig	Brigantine	Schooner	Shallop	Ship	Sloop	Snow	Total
# of type	14	22	20	0	19	39	5	119
Total tons carried	790	1155	607	0	2180	987	335	
Average tons of each type	56	53	30	0	115	25	67	
Range of tonnage of type	40-100	25-100	5-70	0	60-300	8-60	40-85	
# built in Philadelphia	3	1	1	0	4	0	0	
% of total of type built in Philadelphia	21	5	5	0	21	0	0	
# built other than Philadelphia	11‡	21‡	19‡	0	15‡	39*	5*	
% of total built other than Philadelphia	79	95	95	0	79	100	100	
# of Philadelphia owners	4	4	3	0	3	3	0	
% of total Philadelphia owners	25	17	14	0	13	7	0	
# of owners other than Philadelphia	12‡	20*	18*	0	21‡	38*	5*	
% of total owners other than Philadelphia	75	83	86	0	87	93	100	
Range of # of owners	1-3	1-3	1-2	0	1-4	1-2	1	
% of total # of vessels	12	19	17	0	16	33	4	

‡ majority unknown * all unknown

Year: 1766

Total Tons Carried for the Year: 4,204

Type of vessel	Brig	Brigantine	Schooner	Shallop	Ship	Sloop	Snow	Total
# of type	10	11	22	0	16	23	3	85
Total tons carried	575	555	584	0	1710	540	240	
Average tons of each type	58	50	27	0	107	23	80	
Range of tonnage of type	40-100	35-75	5-60	0	75-150	8-45	70-90	
# built in Philadelphia	5	7	3	0	12	6	2	
% of total of type built in Philadelphia	50	64	14	0	75	26	67	
# built other than Philadelphia	5	4	19	0	4	17	1	
% of total built other than Philadelphia	50	36	86	0	25	74	33	
# of Philadelphia owners	20	17	28	0	29	24	3	
% of total Philadelphia owners	71	77	78	0	71	57	75	
# of owners other than Philadelphia	8	5	8	0	12	18	1	
% of total owners other than Philadelphia	29	23	22	0	29	43	25	
Range of # of owners	1-7	1-3	1-3	0	1-5	1-3	1-2	
% of total # of vessels	12	13	26	0	19	27	4	

Year: 1770

Total Tons Carried for the Year: 5,688

Type of vessel	Brig	Brigantine	Schooner	Shallop	Ship	Sloop	Snow	Total
# of type	0	24	12	0	24	20	7	87
Total tons carried	0	1335	335	0	2879	539	600	
Average tons of each type	0	56	28	0	120	27	86	
Range of tonnage of type	0	28-100	12-50	0	64-280	10-70	50-150	
# built in Philadelphia	0	7	2	0	15	1	5	
% of total of type built in Philadelphia	0	29	17	0	63	5	71	
# built other than Philadelphia	0	17	10	0	9	19	2	
% of total built other than Philadelphia	0	71	83	0	37	95	29	
# of Philadelphia owners	0	38	12	0	39	16	13	
% of total Philadelphia owners	0	72	50	0	62	43	87	
# of owners other than Philadelphia	0	15	12	0	24	21	2	
% of total owners other than Philadelphia	0	28	50	0	38	57	13	
Range of # of owners	0	1-4	1-3	0	1-7	1-5	1-4	
% of total # of vessels	0	28	14	0	28	23	8	

Year: 1774 **Total Tons Carried for the Year: 8,621**

Type of vessel	Brig	Brigantine	Schooner	Shallop	Ship	Sloop	Snow	Total
# of type	0	39	25	0	32	24	1	121
Total tons carried	0	2506	747	0	4710	598	60	
Average tons of each type	0	64	30	0	147	25	60	
Range of tonnage of type	0	25-156	10-55	0	60-250	10-50	60	
# built in Philadelphia	0	9	5	0	26	4	0	
% of total of type built in Philadelphia	0	23	20	0	81	17	0	
# built other than Philadelphia	0	30	20	0	6	20	1	
% of total built other than Philadelphia	0	77	80	0	19	83	100	
# of Philadelphia owners	0	58	33	0	60	22	2	
% of total Philadelphia owners	0	77	79	0	73	50	100	
# of owners other than Philadelphia	0	17	9	0	22	22	0	
% of total owners other than Philadelphia	0	23	21	0	27	50	0	
Range of # of owners	0	1-5	1-3	0	1-5	1-3	2	
% of total # of vessels	0	32	21	0	27	20	1	

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Slavers in Disguise: American Whaling and the African Slave Trade, 1845-1862

KEVIN S. REILLY

After three hundred years of virtually uninterrupted operations, the African slave trade to the New World was radically altered in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. During that period the United States and the major European participants in the activity, particularly Great Britain, outlawed all aspects of the trade. In two final penal laws, passed in 1818 and 1820 respectively, England added transportation and the United States added execution to the list of punishments for convicted slave traders. As a result, the English and Americans who had supported the traffic for so long began to withdraw themselves from any direct involvement, and the base of operations for the slave trade shifted from Europe to the slave-importing colonies themselves. By the mid-1820s, slave ships left almost exclusively from the Iberian-American sugar islands and returned with slaves to those same ports.[1]

This restructuring of the Atlantic slave trade resulted from an obvious conflict between the intense demand for slaves in the Iberian colonies and the determined naval and diplomatic effort of Great Britain to eliminate the traffic in African slaves. This battle against human trafficking, which was to carry on into the 1870s, was at times both the prime inhibitor and the prime motivator in the development of the nineteenth-century slave trade.

As the effort to suppress the trade escalated, the slave traffickers responded by creating an elaborate system of evasion. The repeated involvement of American whaleships and whalemen in the overall operations of the slave trade to the two major importers, Brazil and Cuba, illustrates the ability of organized illegal traders to evade federal law enforcement through the use of peripheral communities, legal loopholes, and outright trickery. Before the Civil War, sectional differences and a decentralized organization hindered the efforts of the United States government and of the American people to abolish the African slave trade. As a result, slave traders in the Atlantic utilized the American flag to spread and sustain their commerce in the face of international resistance.

The abolition of the slave trade was largely the result of an English diplomatic campaign, and in 1835 the first and most important fruit of that effort was a treaty signed by the Spanish and English governments. The key element of the treaty was the "Equipment Clause." Before 1835, international agreements insisted that for a voyage to be illegal, there had to be "clear and undeniable proof that slaves had been on board." The equipment clause eliminated the problem of defining the ambiguous term "proof" by listing specific items which could be used as decisive evidence of a slaver's guilt. These included spare planks, more bulkheads than normal, hatches with gratings attached, boiler tubs, excessive water casks, mess tubs, shackles, etc. In 1839, Portugal adopted this very effective legal device in an attempt to drive its own flag out of the slave trade. With the security of these Iberian flags eroded, slave traders extended their use of flags of convenience. And the flag which became increasingly convenient was the Stars and Stripes.

When the treaties with Spain and Portugal were signed, Cuban slave ships began to secure American registrations in the hope of escaping seizure. Much to their chagrin, however, the Royal Navy captured over a dozen American-flagged vessels between 1838 and 1840, nearly all of which were condemned as Spanish property in the mixed courts at Sierra Leone and New York. However, the political fallout of these seizures eventually pushed the door wide open for "American" ships in the slave trade. By 1845, the trade was booming in Brazil, and it was carried out largely in American-flagged ships.

The sectional differences which prevented congressional action against the slave trade and handcuffed American officials trying to enforce the law were evident in the Brazilian trade. Very little money was available for

This paper was originally delivered at the Kendall Whaling Museum's Seventeenth Annual Whaling Symposium, 17-18 October 1992, in Sharon, Massachusetts.

1. For the restructuring of the Atlantic slave trade, see David Eltis, *Economic Growth and the Ending of the Transatlantic Slave Trade* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987), ch. 3-5.

abolition of the trade carried on in American ships because of a national aversion to federal spending. Gorham Parks, the U.S. consul in Rio de Janeiro, frequently complained of having "no funds at my disposal" when trying to track down American slave traders.[2] In addition, American officials in Rio lacked legal support for their efforts. One of the principle reasons American ships were able to pass into the slave trade was because of a procedure, initiated in 1792, which granted sea-letters without restrictions to Americans who purchased American vessels abroad.[3] This procedure enabled men acting as fronts for slave traders to purchase many vessels. Despite consular recommendations to amend the laws providing for sea-letters, they remained intact for the most active years of the Brazilian slave trade. The legislature, however, was not the only department slow to help American officials. The third problem confronting the American effort to stop the slave trade was the absence of consistent judicial rulings against American perpetrators. This resulted in an "unwillingness [on the part of] officers of our navy to meddle with any of them, in consequence of not being moderately supported by courts and juries at home."[4] In the end, the only American restraint on American slaving activities in the Brazilian trade came from a small group of consular officials who worked without the active support of the federal government.

Parks often lamented the fearless manner in which captains entered the trade:

> The difficulty in regard to preventing our vessels being employed in the slave trade continues as great as ever. Our flag is preferred to any other for the purpose of carrying goods over to the coast, with which the slaves are purchased; so, likewise, whenever a captain can be found reckless enough to consent to it; it is preferred to bring back the slaves to Brazil. . . .[5]

Because of the great demand for American vessels, Brazilian slaving agents seized the opportunities offered by visiting whaleships which were often in need of supplies or repairs. The transition from whaling captain to slaving captain was both easy and profitable. The voyage of the Stonington bark *Herald* is a prime example of the financial disaster which made slave trading an attractive pursuit for some men. The ship's master, Samuel Barker, had sailed for the Indian Ocean with his crew in December of 1845, and the voyage had a relatively uneventful start. But the *Herald* fell victim to the typical hazards of a whaling voyage, and after two years of extreme misfortune, the entire crew finally deserted the vessel in Mauritius, complaining of its unseaworthiness. With that Captain Barker gave up whaling and shipped a crew of twelve for the "homeward voyage." After a short stop in St. Helena, however, Barker returned from shore and told the crew that they were headed for Rio.[6]

The New London whaling bark *Fame* ended up in Rio under similar conditions. The vessel cleared port in 1844 under the command of Joseph E. Mitchell, an experienced master and whaler. Two years later, a badly damaged *Fame* anchored in Oahu. Not only was she leaky, but the captain and first mate had both been lost in the Pacific Ocean. Anthony Marks, a native Azorean and citizen of New London, was second mate. He was signed on as captain by the consul there, causing several men to jump ship. In spite of the outcry, Marks managed to secure a crew to sail to Rio "without stopping to fish on the way." The ship was not seaworthy when it arrived in Brazil, and when Marks attempted to get clearance papers, the consul refused them on account of the leaks. Although he was most unhappy, Marks discharged the crew and spent a good deal to fix the bark — an expense well worth the profit he could gain in the slave trade.[7]

The financial disaster that drew men into the slave trade was not always the result of unfortunate weather, however. Captain Simonds of Stonington sailed the bark *Cynosure* from Connecticut in August of 1845 and in one year's time proved that whaling was not his intention. After rounding Cape Horn into the Pacific, Simonds called at the port of Talcahuano, Chile, where he brought his "wife" aboard. He spent over two months in port entertaining her, ordering the crew to fish for his special dinners and spending $800 of the ship's money to show her the city of Lima. When he finally left her, the crew was aware of his lack of concern for their profits. One whaleman wrote that they next sailed to the "Falk[land] Islands for to get oil but the Capt. got about 500 geeses and did not care a dam[n] for the oil — 5 days Lost and got the ship on the Brokes." Simonds had taken the owners for everything and, like Barker, found a way out when he anchored in St. Helena. A week after leaving the island, the bark came to anchor in the harbor of Bahia in northern Brazil "and her[e]," wrote the crewman, "the Capt[ain] will make hes owners f[ee]l sor[r]y."[8]

2. Gorham Parks to James Buchanan, House Executive Document 61 (hereafter H. Ex. Doc. 61), 30th Cong., 2d sess., 18.

3. Robert Edgar Conrad, *World of Sorrow: The African Slave Trade to Brazil* (Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State University Press, 1986), 136-137.

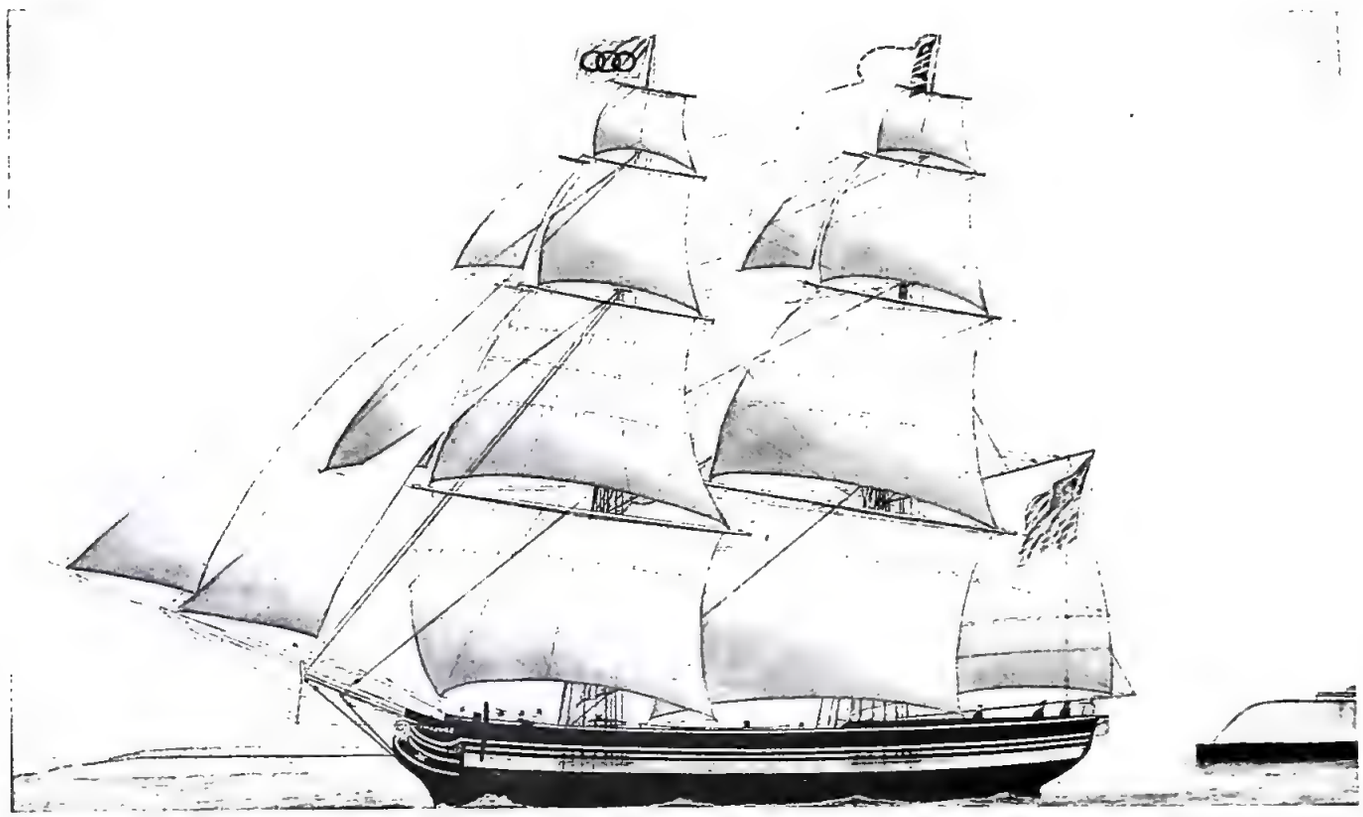
4. Parks to Buchanan, 25 August 1848, H. Ex. Doc. 61, 30th Cong., 2d sess., 29.

5. Ibid.

6. Senate Executive Document 6 (hereafter S. Ex. Doc. 6), 31st Cong., 2d sess., 20-23.

7. *United States v. William Brown*, USCC, Eastern District of Pennsylvania, April 1848. See also *Whaleman's Shipping List* (New Bedford, MA), 30 November 1847.

8. Journal kept by Nicholas Anthony of New London aboard the bark *Cynosure*, 1845-1847, Captain Simonds, Log 37, G. W. Blunt White Library, Mystic Seaport Museum, Mystic, CT; H. Ex. Doc. 61, 30th Cong., 2d sess., 18.



The *Cynosure* as she appeared before her whaling and slaving days. Photo courtesy of the Peabody Essex Museum, Salem, Massachusetts.

Using illegal transfers or sales to American agents in Brazil, whaling captains conspired with slave traders to enter into the illegal traffic with little difficulty. When the bark *Herald* got to Rio de Janeiro, Captain Barker dismissed the crew and refitted for a whaling voyage. On the way to Africa he told one sailor that he had "sold" the ship to a Rio firm for $12,000. There was actually no transfer of property. Barker had contracted with one of Brazil's largest slave traders, Manoel Pinto da Fonseca, for three slaving voyages disguised as a whaler. Upon the successful return from his first slaving run, he made a "sham sale" of the vessel to another renowned slaver, Antonio Guimaraes. This sale enabled the captain to hide behind the Brazilian flag should he be confronted by an American cruiser, and behind the American flag if confronted by a British one.[9] Captain Marks also sold the bark *Fame* to Guimaraes, who apparently belonged to a Rio de Janeiro firm with American and British connections which acted as agent for nearly all American ships in the Brazilian slave trade.[10]

For the most part, those captains who got involved in the Brazilian slave trade relied on Portuguese crews shipped by the slave traders in Rio, but there were a few American whalemen on board these vessels. In testimony before the consul, as one might imagine, the four American crew members aboard the *Fame* claimed that they had been duped. On the way to East Africa, Captain Marks called the crew aft and told them "they all wanted to make money, and that he was going to put them in the way to make it." The four Americans then supposedly gathered to discuss what actions to take but decided that resistance was useless. One man told the consul, "I felt I was in their power — they would not hesitate to throw a man overboard — in his sleep."[11]

There were numerous reasons why the whaleships themselves were so useful to slave traders. One reason

9. S. Ex. Doc. 6, 31st Cong., 2d sess., 10-25. For information on Manoel Pinto da Fonseca, Guimaraes, and other large firms, see Eltis, *Economic Growth*, 151-161.

10. S. Ex. Doc. 66, 31st Cong., 1st sess., 7.

11. The four men were Luther Toole, the first mate, J. H. Plunkett, Ben Ceasar (or Buy Robart), an African-American man acting as cook, and Manuel Baptiste, a boatsteerer. William Brown was apparently English born but "fancied himself a Baltimorean." His nationality was decided as English by the court, so he was not imprisoned for his service on the *Fame*. H. Ex. Doc. 61, 30th Cong., 2d sess., 15-16; S. Ex. Doc. 6, 31st Cong., 2d sess., 22-23; *United States v. William Brown*, USCC, Eastern District of Pennsylvania, April 1848. There were also at least two Americans aboard the *Herald:* Albert Scanton, the mate, and Elias Phipps, a whaleman.

San Paolo da Loanda, Angola, was an operating base for both Portuguese government officials and wealthy slave traders throughout the most active period of illegal trade. Photo courtesy of the Kendall Whaling Museum, Sharon, Massachusetts.

was the simultaneous growth in the size of both slave ships and whaleships. The barracoon, or supply station, system on the African coast had become efficient enough to fill large vessels with slaves in a matter of hours.[12] As a result, the large hold of a whaleship had only become practical for slave trading in the mid-1840s. In addition to size, however, whaleships offered a built-in stove. Boilers were one of the enumerated items in the 1835 Equipment Clause, but try-pots were not. In his book *Six Months on a Slaver*, Edward Manning, who unwittingly signed onto a slaving voyage in 1860, gives an elaborate description of how the try-pots were used to boil rice in order to feed the slave cargo.[13] Below decks, as well, the whaleship was adaptable to the slave trade. Large supplies of food and water were not suspicious to customs or naval personnel, nor was a supply of lumber which could be used as an additional slave deck. This combination of functional adaptability and American registration papers made whaleships not only viable but also desirable slave ships.

As slave ships, these vessels became players in the international hide-and-seek that marked the illicit trade during the 1840s. Whaling captains were crucial to the evasion of naval cruisers, but they seldom had full command of their vessels. Captains of different nationalities would sail on the same vessel simultaneously in order to defend against any possible naval boarders. Termed *capitano de bandiera*, captain of the flag, an American (or Portuguese, or Frenchman, etc.) would come forward as true master so that his nationality could enable the vessel to avoid seizure. Papers were juggled and flags changed rapidly at the first sign of trouble. As a result, seizing a slave ship at sea was problematic for both the U.S. Navy and the Royal Navy.

British and American naval suppression had effected some change in the slave trade system, however, by

12. For slave ship tonnage over time, see Eltis, *Economic Growth*, 130; for whaleships, see Alexander Starbuck, *The History of the American Whale Fishery* (Secaucus, NJ: Castle Books, 1989 [first published 1877]), esp. 662-698.

13. Edward Manning, *Six Months on a Slaver* (Franklin Square, NY: Harper and Brothers, 1879), 68-72. This text is largely excerpted in George Francis Dow, *Slave Ships and Slaving* (Cambridge, MD: Comell Maritime Press, Inc., 1968 [first published 1927]), 310-351.

forcing the traders into more clandestine operations. England took the first coercive measures to stop the slave entries into Rio de Janeiro harbor. The biggest breakthrough in this effort was the 1839 naval authorization to seize Portuguese slave ships. Before this time, ships had been openly discharging and selling slaves in Rio's harbor, but this and later suppression measures forced slave ships to nearby coastal anchorages.[14] These bays seldom had customs officers or concerned consular officials who would hinder slave ships, making them ideal landing spots for suspicious "whalers." The bark *Cynosure*, for instance, delivered slaves to a popular southern slaving depot at Macaé, while both the *Herald* and *Fame* landed slaves at another small port, Cape Frio. By 1848, slave ships were virtually never reported full in Rio's harbor, and the presence of American and British warships forced much of the outfitting to nearby ports. The bark *Fame* seems to be the exception, having sailed from Rio directly, apparently unnoticed due to its whaling outfit. In general, however, suppression made it difficult for vessels to escape outward bound from Rio's harbor. When the bark *Laurens* sailed from Rio in January 1848, the United States yacht which overtook her found 40,000 gallons of fresh water, $20,000 in gold and silver, and charts only of the African coast. Although the vessel was owned by a Long Island whaling firm, Tiffany & Halsey, the bark did not clear Brazil for a whaling voyage and at some point lost its cover. As a result, the vessel was sent to New York and condemned.[15]

The Brazilian slave trade ended abruptly in the summer of 1850, when British naval vessels swept Brazilian harbors and seized any slave ships at hand. Brazilian officials followed the cue and began raids and searches which shut down slave depots. Yielding to the pressure that had ousted the elite planter class from total control of the government, the Brazilian legislature officially declared slave traders to be pirates. Suddenly, the system which had supported so many outlaws in an extravagant lifestyle had been shut down in a year's time, and the slave traders themselves became national pariahs.[16]

The only logical choice for these slave traders was either to go into a legal business or to move their operations elsewhere. Many, if not bankrupt, tried the former, but a few of the most well-established firms opted for the latter. Cuban sugar fields demanded increasing numbers of slaves through the 1850s, and the slave traders with capital and connections on the African coast were in a position to provide that labor. For a variety of reasons, primarily the availability of large vessels, several of these slave traders chose New York City as their new base of operations.

In 1852, a network of firms established offices in downtown Manhattan and raised some eyebrows. The "Portuguese Company," a blanket term New Yorkers used to describe the new firms, was made up of men recently arrived from Brazil. José da Costa Lima Viana and Manoel Basilio da Cuhna Reis had both started as clerks in Brazilian slaving firms. Another key trader was John A. Machado, a naturalized Azorean who left Rio when the British attempts to suppress slaving operations became severe. The men did not work as a true "company," but their loose association gave rise to the most successful and evasive slaving enterprise in the United States. Together they contributed to the initial expansion of the slave trade to Cuba which grew for the next decade.[17]

By 1857, New York's illegal offices were busy sending a record number of vessels to the African coast. The money to support the voyages came mainly from Cuba. It was said that American capital was used to fund the ventures, mostly in small amounts invested in joint stock companies, but the Spaniards were responsible for reopening the trade on a large scale. The Portuguese Company was absorbed in 1857 by the larger "Spanish Company," which had bases in both New York and Havana, and by 1859 they had taken most of the business from Portuguese slavers.[18]

There was little resistance to their operations at first. Legally, the slave traders were practically immune to losses. Judicial policy defined by New York District Judge Samuel Betts assured that slave ships and owners were seldom brought to trial. Federal officials had little success in convicting slave traders and, as a result, attempted arrests less often. In order to combat the slave ships that so easily escaped New York, President James Buchanan decided, for political and diplomatic reasons, to supply naval cruisers to aid in the suppression effort. In 1859 an American squadron was dispatched to the African coast, but despite the ship seizures made by Buchanan's naval squadrons, the slave trade flourished in American ports because of tepid public support for its abolition. Not only was the cost of suppression high, but few slaves came to

14. Eltis, *Economic Growth*, 199-200.

15. H. Ex. Doc. 61, 30th Cong., 2d sess., 15-18; S. Ex. Doc. 6, 31st Cong., 2d sess., 6-24; S. Ex. Doc. 5, 31st Cong., 2d sess., 7-8; Warren S. Howard, "The United States Government and the African Slave Trade, 1837-1862" (Ph.D. diss., University of California at Los Angeles, July 1959), 249-252.

16. For a thorough discussion of suppression, see Conrad, *World of Sorrow*, and Leslie M. Bethell, *The Abolition of the Brazilian Slave Trade* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970).

17. Eltis, *Economic Growth*, 157; Warren S. Howard, *American Slavers and the Federal Law, 1837-1862* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press, 1963), 49-51.

18. Eltis, *Economic Growth*, 153, 158; Howard, *American Slavers*, 52-54.

the United States itself; it was therefore seen as a maritime or foreign problem. As a result, unenforced laws led to the misperception that these laws simply were unenforceable, allowing slavers to infiltrate the many ports of the Atlantic coast.[19]

Whaling merchants were easy prey for slaving firms who were looking for vessels to send to the African coast. Business was down, and newspapers talked of the "gloomy prospect" of losing voyages.[20] While large whaling corporations in New Bedford were not threatened by immediate losses, smaller firms faced the reality of bankruptcy and many were forced to sell their whaleships. Using agents as fronts, slave traders bought these large whalers to sail to Africa.

The whale ports did not prove as practical as the traders had intended, at first. James H. Hannum made the first known attempt to "test the waters." This Boston ship broker bought a New London whaler in November of 1858 from the bankrupt firm of Perkins and Smith. It was the 420-ton bark *Laurens*, the very vessel seized off Brazil ten years earlier. Hannum fitted her out in New London, supposedly for a one-season whaling voyage in the Atlantic, and he shipped a crew through an "experienced whaling agent." But some of the outfit came to the attention of customs officials. Below deck, the bulkhead of the lower cabin had been moved forward and made tight, and the space between decks was whitewashed and painted. The whaling gear itself was scant, and the necessary items that were aboard were old and worn. Federal officials and the port's collector watched Hannum carefully for anything that would merit arrest, and when he tried to transfer the vessel to someone at a loss, the authorities moved in.[21]

On board were several charts and correspondence which the prosecutor, District Attorney William Shipman, thought "disposes beyond question the pretense that she was destined for a whaler."[22] The District Court of Connecticut, however, did not agree. Judge Charles A. Ingersoll delivered a scathing refutation of the prosecution's argument against the bark *Laurens*. The prosecution had relied heavily upon a scenario presented in Theodor Canot's famous book *Twenty Years of an African Slaver* and believed that this evidence, in addition to the lack of whaling gear, should have been enough to establish logically that the ship was a slaver. But the judge thought otherwise:

> No suspicion, or surmise, founded on possibilities or probabilities, is sufficient, to establish the charge, that a penal law has been violated, however high or however humble the individual claimed to be implicated, or however aggravated or trifling the offence may be.[23]

This remained the position of nearly all federal judges until the outbreak of the Civil War.

Because of the judicial rulings in whaleship slave trade cases, and the inexperience or nonchalance of federal customs agents, New York and New England became home to many slave ships and crews. The only other whaling vessel libelled under the Buchanan administration was the 700-ton ship *Atlantic*, and this vessel, like the *Laurens*, was returned to its owners and successfully landed a cargo of slaves in Cuba. The *Atlantic* had been seized upon information that $20,000 had been sent from a Havana house to Amedes, Ambreges & Company in New York for the purchase of two slave ships. At the time, these two whaling-turned-slaving vessels were owned by a former New Bedford whaleman named Jose Maciel. Maciel escaped port with the New Bedford ship *Comora* and reportedly landed one slave cargo. The other ship, the *Atlantic*, he transferred to another former whaleman, Francis J. Silva. Six months later, in April of 1860, the *Atlantic* returned to New York under a different captain and was then sold to yet another slave trader, Robert McCormick, who eventually scuttled the ship after its final slaving voyage.[24] This same scenario of seizures, hasty transfers, suspicious voyages, and scuttled vessels occurred repeatedly in the slave trade of these years. The former Fairhaven whaler *Iowa*, Sag Harbor's *Montauk*, and New Bedford's whaleship *Brutus* all supplied the growing demand for large, cloaked American slave ships.[25]

The desire to use the cover of a whaling voyage became most apparent when slave traders began to purchase large merchant vessels to outfit as "whalers." Early in 1859, two men with connections in an Australian whaling firm purchased the 798-ton New York ship *Memphis*. John Moody and Andrew Fletcher sent her to

19. W. E. B. Dubois, *The Suppression of the African Slave-Trade to the United States of America, 1683-1870* (New York: Russell and Russell, 1965 [first published 1898]), 196.

20. *Whaleman's Shipping List*, 9 January 1858.

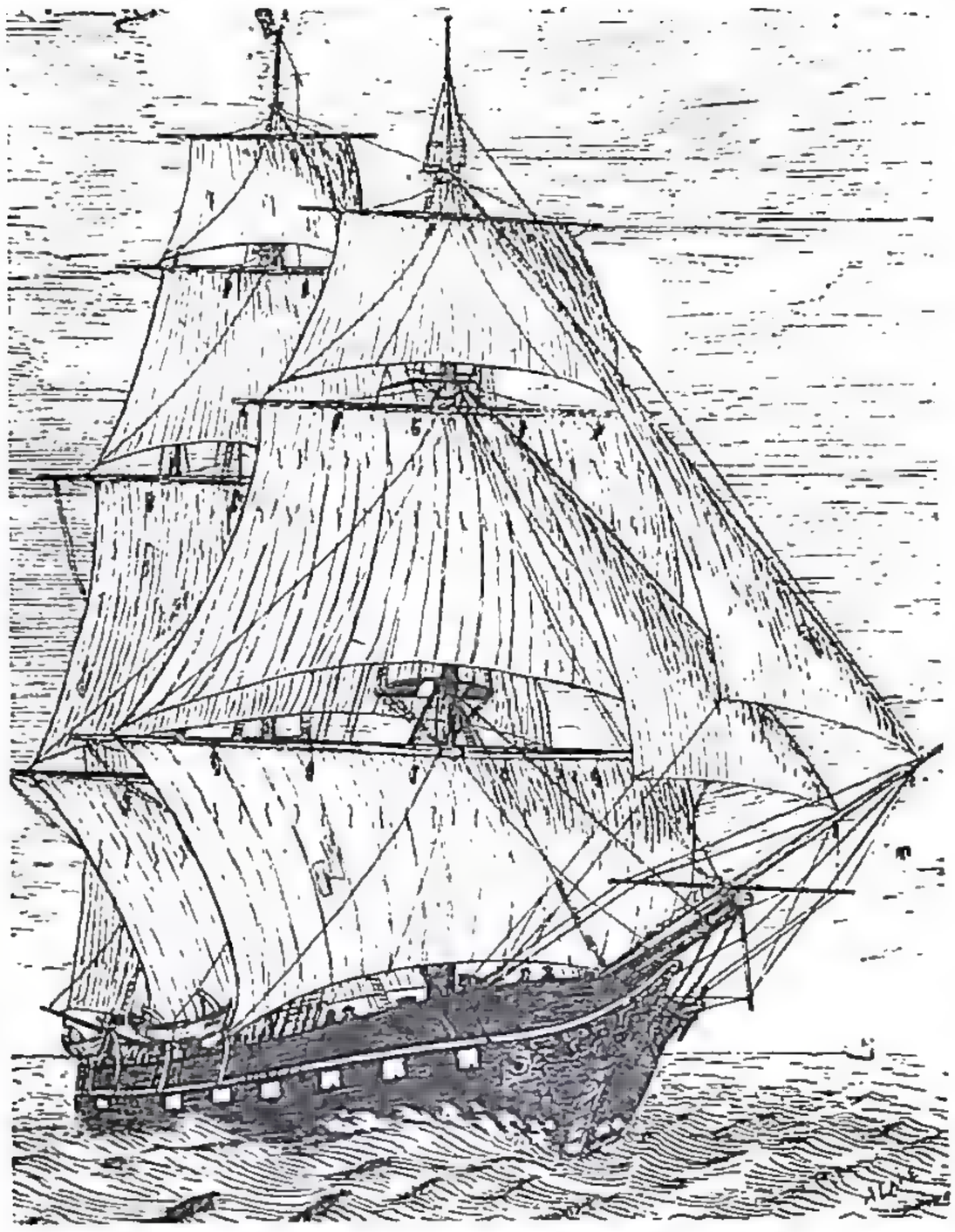
21. *United States v. the Barque Laurens*, USDC, District of Connecticut, February 1859, no. 7; Howard, "The United States Government and the African Slave Trade," 428-431.

22. *Whaleman's Shipping List*, 1 February 1859.

23. *U.S. v. the Barque Laurens*, USDC, District of Connecticut, February 1859, no. 7.

24. Charles W. Agard Papers, Box 2, Kendall Whaling Museum, Sharon, MA (hereafter Agard Papers, KWM); Howard, *American Slavers*, 251, and "The United States Government and the African Slave Trade," 433; Robert Decker, *The Whaling Industry of New London* (York, PA: Liberty Cap Books, 1973), 138-139.

25. *Whaleman's Shipping List*, 3 April and 21 July 1860, 27 August 1861; *U.S. v. Pierre L. [Pearce] Pierce*, USDC, District of Massachusetts, March 1863, no. 45; Agard Papers, Box 2. See also Howard, *American Slavers*, 214-252 passim.



The whaleship *Brutus* as rendered by Captain A. Lake, a collector of one story of that vessel's slaving voyage. Photo courtesy of the Kendall Whaling Museum.

New Bedford to outfit for whaling in the South Seas. The *Memphis* ended her voyage, however, scuttled on the Cuban coast. Another ship ostensibly given a whaling outfit was the *Thomas Watson*. This vessel was a fast Baltimore-built ship which had already been employed in the slave trade by its owner John Machado. Machado had been one of the original Portuguese traders who entered New York City in the early 1850s. With his accomplice Mary Jane Watson, Machado outfitted a sizeable fleet of slave ships, several of which were whalers. In June of 1860, they sent the *Thomas Watson* to New London to outfit and sign a crew for a three-year voyage. Denied clearance from New London, the ship returned to New York and departed on the strange slave voyage described in Edward Manning's book.[26]

The American effort to stop the slave trading network based in New York was ineffective because the federal government did not use consistent methods to suppress the trade. President Buchanan's most decisive action against slavers was dispatching the African and Cuban squadrons to stop vessels at sea, but this was largely a diplomatic measure with little effective result. The support for these coastal patrols came from a Congress more interested in protecting national sovereignty than in the extermination of the African slave trade. The authority of the federal government to suppress the pirate operations was diluted by diplomatic relations between America and Britain as well as political relations between North and South, Republican and Democrat.[27] Public support for the abolition of the slave trade was also weak in major port cities. The growing population of landless laborers and middle-class merchants involved in maritime affairs was not part of the abolition movement. Within the shifting port communities of New York and New England whaling centers, slavers were able to circulate and operate with all the immunity that their lucrative offers could buy. With local conniving and judicial soft-stepping, the organized agents of the slave trade infiltrated northern harbors with the full understanding that stopping slave voyages was not a national concern.[28]

The small harbors of Long Island presented one haven from U.S. marshals in New York and New Bedford. The use of these small ports occurred as early as November of 1860, when the whaleship *Romulus*, formerly of Mystic, Connecticut, began taking on odd supplies from New York tugboats while anchored in Cold Spring Harbor. When the vessel finally sailed, one newspaper pointed the finger at that port's officer, Jacob Hewlett:

> No doubt remains in the minds of many who observed her movements that she has gone on a slave trading voyage. It is said that the Custom House officer at

26. Agard Papers, Box 2, KWM; Manning, *Six Months on a Slaver*, 10-12; S. Ex. Doc. 56, 38th Cong., 1st sess., 5; H. Ex. Doc. 7, 36th Cong., 2d sess., 80-85.

27. The naval boardings that did occur on the African coast were particularly ineffectual against vessels disguised as whaleships. The *Brutus* was boarded by the USS *Mohican* near the mouth of the Congo River, but acting captain William Jackson assured the officer that they were cruising the humpback grounds in order to train the greenhands. Likewise, the *Thomas Watson* avoided entanglements with a British steamer by making everything look "as whaler-like as we could make it." In the first eight months of 1859, an American commissioner in West Africa, Edmund Gabriel, reported that of the thirteen slave ships appearing on the coast, five were disguised as whalers. Manning, *Six Months on a Slaver*, 29-30; *Whaleman's Shipping List*, 27 August 1861; Captain A. Lake, *Prose and Poetry* (private printing, ca. 1905); Howard, "The United States Government and the African Slave Trade," 428. For additional whaleship boardings, see House Ex. Doc. 7, 36th Cong., 2d sess., 344-347. For a slightly fictionalized account, see chapter 7 in Edward Shippen, *Thirty Years at Sea: The Story of a Sailor's Life* (Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1879, reprint 1979). The author is indebted to Briton C. Busch for this last reference.

28. See W. Jeffrey Bolster, "'To Feel Like a Man': Black Seamen in the Northern States, 1800-1860," *Journal of American History* (March 1990), esp. 1193-1199.

> Cold Spring is a decided old fogy — never without a pipe in his mouth — and that it is no difficult matter for any vessel to get "papers" from him.[29]

This is not to say that there was no official resistance to the preparation of slave ships in northeastern ports. The customs information system had improved, and officials were generally more aware of slaving activities than they had been two years earlier. But the standard judicial position on these cases meant that even well-known slave ships were immune to the law. In August of 1860, even a visiting merchant in New Bedford realized the helpless situation in which officials found themselves: "The ship *Brutus* they say is fitting out for slaver but no one will make complaint. — The owner or agent invites inspection and of course nothing can be done that will be of any use."[30] The agent, Albert Bigelow, encouraged officials to inspect the vessel before he sailed so as not to delay his operation. They did inspect her but found nothing sufficient to warrant seizure. She cleared port and three months later landed approximately seven hundred West African slaves in Cuba.[31]

In 1861, now free of its southern members, Congress not only authorized an expanded naval force to fight the Confederacy but also, as part of its political consolidation, insisted upon the extermination of the slave trade. Shortly after the bombardment of Fort Sumpter, the new Secretary of the Interior, Caleb B. Smith, was assigned the task of abolishing slave trading in northern ports. Congress appropriated $1.8 million toward this effort, enabling Smith to create an organized force of officers. He gathered all federal marshals from Union seaboard states and brought them to New York, where he familiarized them with the outfits of a slave ship and promised his officers remuneration for any costs incurred during the execution of their duties.[32]

Again, the suppression effort came from the top down. The whaling agents and sailors of the northeast were not involved in a grassroots effort to end slavery. Many had fallen on hard times and, as a result, some gladly joined in the profitable slave commerce. Slave traders themselves had roots in the maritime infrastructure. They were ship chandlers and ship brokers and were aided by agents, outfitters, and captains. With few exceptions, the Spanish Company offices which remained in operation in 1861 were not run by rich dealers; the large firms like Figanière, Reis & Company had gone bankrupt. During the summer and fall of 1861, it was the small ship brokerage of Oaksmith & Company which seized the opportunity presented by the withdrawal of the U.S. squadron from Cuba's coast and launched new slaving ventures in whaleships.

Appleton Oaksmith was a master of manipulation, but he preferred to manage things from behind a curtain. He was a criminal who understood how best to elude federal agents through his knowledge of maritime activities and the use of cooperative accomplices. He had once been a captain on the coast of Africa and eventually made a modest living as a broker, but by 1859 he was supposedly insolvent. With his new partners José Pietrahita and Ramodella Sorre, Oaksmith reestablished his business by acquiring whaleships from Sag Harbor and New Bedford to employ in the slave trade to Cuba.[33]

Oaksmith greased the wheels of his operation with large amounts of capital. He paid extra for everything. In June of 1861, shipping agents Sturges & Clearman approached U.S. Marshal Robert Murray about suspicious persons wanting to buy a Sag Harbor whaler, the bark *Augusta*, which had been on a long voyage that cost her owners about $45,000. To cut their losses, the owners put her up for sale upon return, and Oaksmith was there to buy her, paying $4,900 for the vessel and much of her whaling gear. It was a deal the owners, Gilbert H. Cooper and Daniel T. Willets, regarded as "an extremely fortunate sale." With the enormous loss the *Augusta* had just taken, Willets & Company was in no position to deny Oaksmith's offer.[34]

The organizers relied not only upon generous offers of money, but also on the reputation of whalemen in their home ports. For the ships that he purchased on Long Island, Oaksmith secured both captain and outfitters right in Greenport. By the time he was preparing the *Augusta* for her voyage, Oaksmith had already slipped the schooner *Wells* past the customs officers after an inspection. As there were no federal officers posted in the small harbor, and his connections were secure, Oaksmith enlisted aid for a new venture. After purchasing the *Augusta*, he gave her title to Jacob A. Appley in order to keep his firm out of the foreground of his operations. The partners then enlisted the aid of an agent and an experienced Greenport whaling master to prepare the vessel for sea. Together these men earned a reputation in the eyes of the coastal inspector that would eventually give them away. In a letter to U.S. Marshal Murray, the inspector wrote:

29. *Whaleman's Shipping List*, 13 November 1860.

30. From an anonymous letter dated Friday, 17 August 1860, ship *Brutus*, manuscript collection, Kendall Whaling Museum.

31. *Whaleman's Shipping List*, 8 August 1860 and 27 August 1861.

32. DuBois, *The Suppression of the African Slave Trade*, 191-192.

33. *Whaleman's Shipping List*, 24 June 1862; *U.S. v. Appleton Oaksmith*, USCC, District of Massachusetts, May 1873, no. 15.

34. S. Ex. Doc. 40, 37th Cong., 2d sess., 33-34.

> I know Appley, Oaksmith, Israel Peck, and Captain Isaac M. Cas[e] very well. I know their views with regard to secession and slavery, especially the African slave trade . . . . [T]hey are a damnable set, the whole of them; I know them all.[35]

Sometime in the middle of July, Oaksmith, under an assumed name, made a visit to New Bedford to lay the foundations for another slave voyage. He approached Ambrose Landre, another experienced whaling captain, and began a casual conversation. Landre proceeded to tell this stranger about his most recent voyage, which was wrongfully rumored to have been a slaving voyage. He later testified that he told Oaksmith, "I had as lives go there as not, but didn't want to be accused of it, unless I was going." Seizing the opportunity, Oaksmith introduced the idea of outfitting a "whaler" to go to the coast of Africa and told Landre to find a suitable ship.[36] New Bedford's whaleships were quickly being sold or transferred out of the industry at the start of the Civil War. As a result, Oaksmith could find several vessels suitable for his trade merely by roaming New Bedford's wharfs with his local partner.[37]

Landre and Oaksmith finally decided upon the *Margaret Scott* as the vessel to send to Africa. Her owner, Rodney French, was a wealthy man who had interests in several other vessels, including one in which Landre was part owner. Already being acquainted with French, Landre bargained for the *Margaret Scott* before she ever went to auction and bought her for a meager $2,400. Oaksmith needed someone to stand in as owner of his new bark, just as Jacob Appley had taken the title of the *Augusta*, and the obvious choice was Landre. He was in debt from his own whaleship investment, however, and feared that the *Margaret Scott* would be seized by his creditor.[38] The only choice was to bring in a partner. Samuel P. Skinner took title to the vessel and came to manage much of its outfitting as a slave slip. Like Landre, he was an experienced ship master whose fortunes were declining with those of the whaling industry. As one of the many lower middle-class merchants whose small assets were threatened, Landre and Skinner could not refuse the offer of $5,000 for a voyage on which they "had as lives go as not."[39]

The slavers also needed a crew to sail to the coast of Africa and relied upon cooperative shipping agents to fill berths with sailors "who would not be likely to be scrupulous." James Smith, a Boston shipping agent, shipped a crew of nineteen for a whaling voyage. They were not told of Oaksmith's plan, for he "relied upon the large pay, and the coercion of the circumstances, when on the coast, to ensure their consent."[40] He had already promised Landre that mates would receive $1,500 and sailors $500, a very high wage that Oaksmith knew was hard for poor men to refuse. He insisted to Landre that they be signed on only for whaling:

> . . . it would not do for any one, officers or men, to know the ship was going to the Coast of Africa. Mr. Oaksmith said everything would be made right when we came there to the Coast. They would all come into it, they always did.[41]

Slave captains kept their crews in the dark as long as possible, elaborating the farce by actually spending time whaling. While supercargoes were ashore making arrangements for a slave cargo, captains would cruise the African humpback grounds, occasionally even taking a whale.[42] When the truth of the voyage was revealed, however, sailors were generally pleased with the turn of events, though perhaps fearful of being made outlaws. Any experienced whaleman, like the *Margaret Scott*'s second mate Antone Frazier, would probably have recognized the shady outfittings of slave traders even before sailing. The potential wages of the illicit voyages were simply too tempting, however, and sometimes made for bragging rights when the crew returned to the country.[43] Willingly or not, the sailors were manipulated onto slave ships where there was no choice but to aid the pirate captains.

The extermination of slave trading from American ports had to be achieved through the increased diligence not only of federal marshals but also of local port authorities. Information between these offices had improved greatly by 1861. In the summer of that year, the U. S. marshal in Boston received notice from the Salem city marshal to watch a suspicious vessel, the former whaler *Lady Suffolk*, which was expected to sail to Africa. During

35. W. G. King to Robert Murray, S. Ex. Doc. 40, 37th Cong., 2d sess., 54.

36. *U.S. v. Margaret Scott*, USDC, District of Massachusetts, December 1862, no. 27; *U.S. v. Appleton Oaksmith*, USCC, District of Massachusetts, May 1873, no. 15.

37. For shifting investments and the sale of ships in war, see Starbuck, *History of the American Whale Fishery*, 101; Elmo P. Hohman, *The American Whaleman* (New York: Longmans, Green and Company, 1928), 290; Samuel Eliot Morison, *The Maritime History of Massachusetts, 1783-1860* (New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1921), 316-318.

38. Landre, in debt for the bark *Seine*, sailed from New Bedford on 18 October 1853 and returned 28 August 1858. Starbuck, *History of the American Whale Fishery*, 504-505.

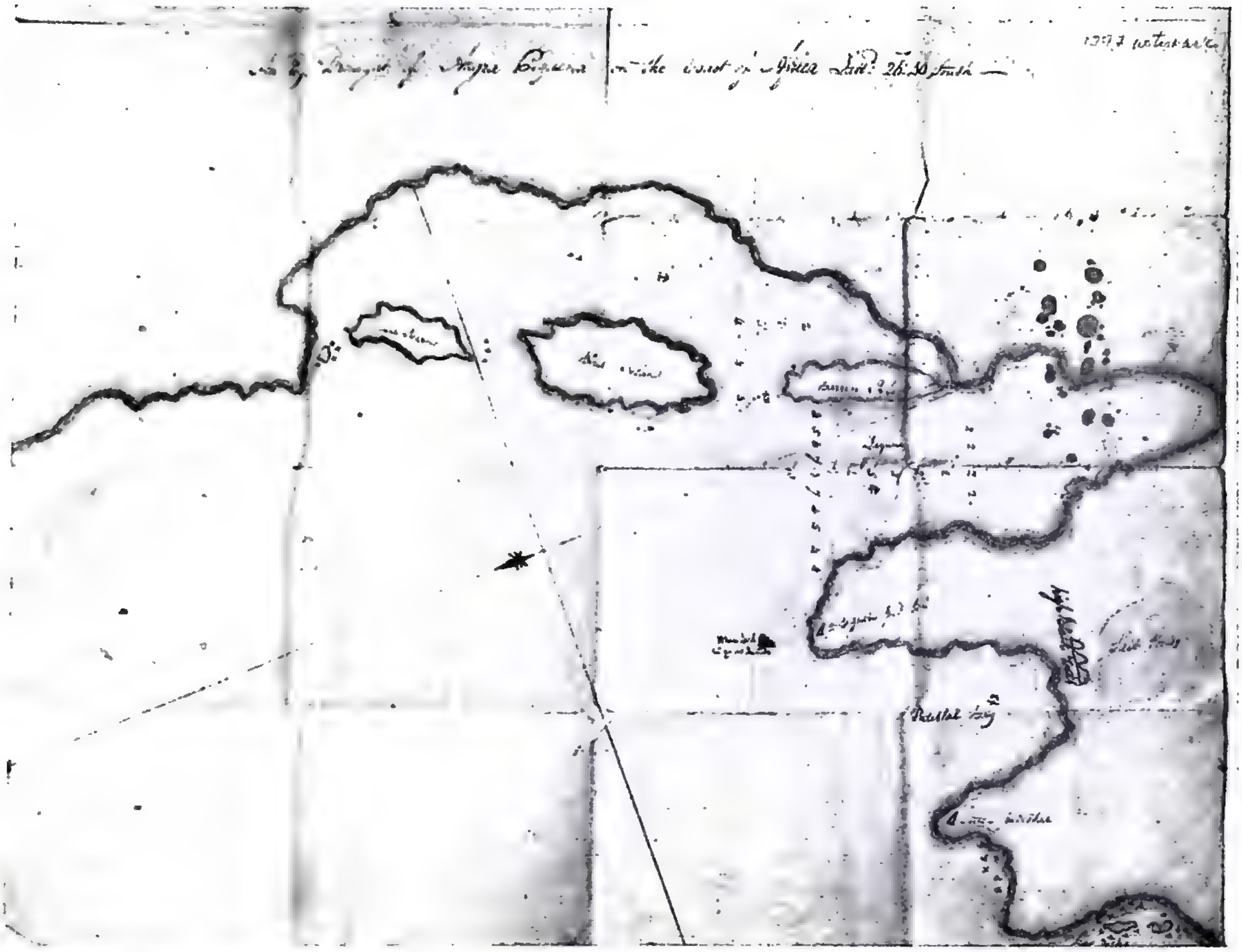
39. *U.S. v. Margaret Scott*, USDC, District of Massachusetts, December 1862, no. 27; *Whaleman's Shipping List*, 24 June 1862.

40. *Whaleman's Shipping List*, 24 June 1862.

41. *U.S. v. Margaret Scott*, USDC, District of Massachusetts, December 1862.

42. See Agard papers, Box 2, KWM; *U.S. v. Zeno Kelly*, USDC, District of Connecticut, September 1863, no. 23; *New York Evening Post*, 23 March 1861; Manning, *Six Months on a Slaver*, 21, 33.

43. *U.S. v. Samuel P. Skinner*, USCC, District of Massachusetts, October 1861, no. 210.



This hand-drawn slave trader's map of a Portuguese slave factory is dated 1797. Photo courtesy of the Kendall Whaling Museum, Sharon, Massachusetts.

the same month, officers in New Bedford became aware of Skinner's activities surrounding Oaksmith's bark *Margaret Scott* and of another man named Zeno Kelly who was outfitting the whaleship *Tahmiroo* for a similar voyage.[44] At the same time in New York, U.S. Marshal Robert Murray had heard of Oaksmith's designs on the *Augusta*, which was anchored in Greenport, Long Island. Greenport's enthusiastic customs officer wrote to Murray:

> If there is any way under heaven that I can be of service to you in this matter, or others of a similar kind, I am at your service at any cost. Can you give me any authority to act here in emergencies? I will give them particular hell to the utmost of my ability.[45]

44. *U.S. v. Lady Suffolk*, USDC, District of Massachusetts, September 1861, no. 43; S. Ex. Doc. 40, 37th Cong., 2d sess.; *U.S. v. Zeno Kelly*, USCC, District of Massachusetts, October 1863.

45. King to Murray, S. Ex. Doc. 40, 37th Cong., 2d sess., 54.

Agents now had incentive to prosecute slave traders. Because of the Republicans' desire to appear unified against the slave trade, there was ample money allocated to pay federal officers for their work and to provide incentives to local authorities.

With the government push to end the slave trade, judicial rulings also began to support the arrests of slavers, making enforcement efforts seem worthwhile to marshals and their aides. One of the best examples of both the executive and judicial pressure on slave traders is the case against the *Augusta*. Secretary Caleb Smith appointed Judge William Shipman, late prosecutor of the whaler-slaver *Laurens*, to hear the case as a substitute for the overworked Samuel Betts. Betts, who heard most maritime cases in New York's southern district, was the strict legal constructionist who established the precedents which made it difficult to get slave ships and their owners convicted. In a political maneuver, Secretary Smith instead placed the former slave trade prosecutor on the bench to rule against

a very public case. The outfits of a whaleship, Judge Shipman decided, were no longer sufficient to evade seizures as a slave ship. Although the burden of proof still rested upon the district attorney, experience with whaleships in the slave trade strongly suggested that if a vessel was not appropriately outfitted for a whaling voyage, its intent must be construed as illegal.[46]

There were still loopholes in the law which allowed vessels to return to their owners and sail to Africa, so the definitive deterrent to slave trading was the prosecution of agents and managers themselves. In 1861 the prosecution managed to convict several individuals who outfitted whaler-slave ships. The judicial crackdown in northeastern ports resulted, for instance, in the arrests of Oaksmith and his cohorts. As a result of these arrests, over a dozen such cases came before the District Court of Massachusetts in 1861 and 1862. Samuel Skinner was one of the first men in the country to face a tough sentence for his involvement in the trade. Prosecuted by the famous author and Massachusetts District Attorney Richard Henry Dana, Jr., Skinner received five years and a $1,000 fine. Prison terms for others soon followed.[47] Few of the ship outfitters escaped with the slap on the hand they might have received only two or three years earlier. Judges in New York and Boston were now administering justice with a heavier hand.

Of the major organizers of the trade in American whaling ports — Oaksmith & Company, John Machado, and a few other New York offices — only a few ever faced the judge. Pierre Pearce was released from New York in order to face Massachusetts charges for fitting out the whaleship *Brutus*, at which point he wisely went into hiding. Appleton Oaksmith managed to break out of the Suffolk County jail where he was awaiting sentencing for his eight-count conviction. His partners, Pietrahita, Sorre, Aymar, and his brother Sydney, all left the country after hearing of Samuel Skinner's conviction.[48]

The stronger sentences did finally scare or destroy the slaving firms and kept new voyages from taking place. No measure was more pronounced than the execution of the infamous captain of the *Erie*, Nathaniel Gordon. His death in February of 1862, which so many officials believed would never be supported, gave testimony to the determination of the government to reverse the years of tolerance. As a result, fear of the law quickly eradicated the illicit activity, because for the first time in American history a slave trader was punished, as defined in the 1820 act, as a pirate.

The arbitrary nature of slave trade law enforcement demonstrates the largely tangential position the illegal trade had in political and diplomatic issues. The most illustrative example of this appears in Charles Walter Agard's oral history of Appleton Oaksmith's exploits after his escape from prison. After a short career as a blockade runner, Oaksmith bought a plantation outside of New Bern, North Carolina. He then went on to have a career as the unsuccessful president of a local railroad, apparently weaseling out of an indictment after the company's financial collapse. In 1872, so the story goes, Oaksmith, under a false name, went to Washington, D.C. and represented himself as his own lawyer to President Ulysses S. Grant. Having "so personally charmed Grant," he announced his own identity, apparently to their mutual amusement. On 9 November 1872, as the records do in fact reveal, Appleton Oaksmith received a presidential pardon for his crimes as an African slave trader.[49] Suppressing the trade from the United States emerged as a national imperative with the Civil War, but in practice, the trade and its operators were never subjected to consistent law enforcement.

46. For Shipman, see S. Ex. Doc. 40, 37th Cong., 2d sess., 16; for a similar ruling, see *U.S. v. Margaret Scott*, USDC, District of Massachusetts, December 1862. For the legal implications of the *Augusta* case, see Howard, "The United States Government and the African Slave Trade," 529-530.

47. In a letter from Boston's British consul Francis Lousada to Earl Russel, Lousada noted Skinner's case as a pivotal court decision. Along with the death sentence of slave trade captain Nathaniel Gordon in New York, he noted the importance of Skinner's conviction as the first conviction for "the intent only" of slaving. He regarded this not only as a sign of U.S. determination to end the trade but also added, "There is no doubt that this sentence on Captain Skinner will deter many who have hitherto enjoyed impunity from repeating their ventures." British Parliamentary Papers - Slave Trade, vol. 47, class B, 1861, no. 227. For other convictions and prison terms, see the cases against Zeno Kelly (n. 41 above) and John C. Cook (*U.S. v. John C. Cook*, USDC, District of Massachusetts, May 1863); see also Howard, *American Slavers*, 235.

48. *U.S. v. Pierre L. [Pearce] Pierce*, USDC, District of Massachusetts, March 1863, no. 45; Howard, *American Slavers*, 178, 233; *U.S. v. Appleton Oaksmith*, USCC, District of Massachusetts, May 1873, no. 15.

49. Agard Papers, Box 2, KWM.

American Whaleships Involved in the Atlantic Slave Trade

Vessel	Port Outfitted	Master	Owner	Notes
Cynosure (Bark, 230 t.)	Bahia, Brazil	Simonds	?	Landed slaves at Macaé (?) August 1847.
Fame (Bark, 258 t.)	Rio de Janiero	Anthony Marks	Manuel Antonio Guimaraes	Landed approximately 600 slaves at Cape Frio in August 1847.
Herald (Ship, 241 t.)	San Sebastian and Paranagua	Samuel Barker	Chartered by Manoel Pinto da Fonseca, then sold to M. A. Guimaraes	Cleared San Sebastian 5 May 1848 and landed approx. 1,150 slaves at Cape Frio. Cleared for second voyage from Paranagua 24 Feb. 1849; Barker supposedly died on this voyage.
Louisa Beaton (Brig, 168 t.)	Rio de Janiero	Joseph Bailey	[Miner, Lawrence Co., New London]	Boarded several times in 1850 and seized 8 Sept. that year but dismissed. Vessel charged with slaving at St. Helena, 1858.
Ceres (Bark, 176 t.)	Rio de Janiero	?	Josiah M. Clapp, Agent	Former New London whaler purchased 1847 for use as an slaving auxiliary.
Laurens (Bark, 420 t.)	Rio de Janiero --- New London	Theodore Littlefield --- William R. Curtis	[Tiffany & Halsey, Sag Harbor, LI] --- James H. Hannum, Boston	Cleared 23 Jan. 1848 and seized outside Rio by U.S. yacht *Okahye*. Libelled and forfeited by owners in New York. --- Libelled 21 Jan. 1859 but dismissed 31 March. Reported landing approx. 600 slaves in Cuba. Later captured on West African coast by British man-of-war and condemned under Mexican law.
Thomas Watson (Ship, 349 t.)	New York --- Outfitted New London, cleared New York	Elliot --- ?	John A. Machado --- Mary Jane Watson	Cleared Jan. or Feb. 1858. Seized on African coast by HMS *Bloodhound* in spring 1858 but released. --- Cleared June 1860 and landed approx. 800 slaves in Cuba.
Memphis (Ship, 798 t.)	New Bedford	John B. Moody, NYC	Andrew W. Fletcher, Sidney, NSW	Purchased by Moody & Fletcher for $12,000 to employ in South Seas fishery. Cleared 27 Feb. 1959 but reported in St. Helena Oct. 1859, having landed approx. 500 slaves in Cuba.
Comora (Ship, 440 t.)	New Bedford	José C. S. Maciel	Maciel for Amedes, Ambreges & Co., NYC	Cleared 31 July 1959; reported Bahia July 1860 having landed one slave cargo in Cuba; returned to New Bedford June 1861. Sold Nov.; name changed to *Lady Young*.
Atlantic (Ship, 700 t.)	New Bedford --- New York	Francis J. Silva --- ?	Francis J. Silva --- Robert McCormick	Silva purchased *Atlantic* from J. C. S. Maciel (see *Comora)* June 1859. Vessel seized 21 July, released 2 Sept., cleared 8 Sept. --- *Atlantic* returned to New York under [Edward S. ?] Davoll. Purchased 6 April 1860 by McCormick and recleared 7 April. Landed slaves in Cuba Dec. 1860.
Iowa (Bark, 263 t.)	New York	?	Johnson (?)	Cleared 31 Dec. 1859. Reportedly landed one slave cargo from Congo in Cuba.

Montauk (Ship, 505 t.)	New York	J. T. Quayle/ [John D. ?] Wilson	Wm. Sharpe, John D. Wilson, John T. Pringle	Quayle purchased from New London, one Mitchell acted as outfitter and supercargo. Quayle gave up command to Wilson after clearing 28 April 1860. Vessel captured by Spanish steamer *Neptuno* with 916 slaves, then destroyed.
Brutus (Ship, 470 t.)	New Bedford	Edward S. Davoll	John A. Machado/ Pierre L. Pearce	Albert S. Bigelow and Andrew H. Potter & Co. were agent outfitters. Cleared Aug. 1860; Davoll left ship in Azores, first mate Wm. Jackson assumed command. Landed approx. 700 slaves in Cuba in 1861, then burned.
Romulus (Ship, 365 t.)	Cold Spring Harbor, L.I.	John P. Dole	John P. Dole, Boston, Benjamin F. Turner, Provincetown	Vessel purchased from Mystic, CT by "Capt. Cameron" for lumber trade, but bill of sale to Dole. Cleared Cold Spring Harbor 3 Nov. 1860.
Augusta (Bark, 390 t.)	Greenport, L.I.	Isaac M. Case (?)	Jacob Appley for Appleton Oaksmith & Co.	Seized 23 June 1861 and again 17 Nov.; condemned both times.
Tahmiroo (Ship, 371 t.)	New Bedford	John C. Cook	Jabez S. Hathaway; Zeno Kelly, Agent	Hathaway purchased vessel 14 June 1861, cleared 3 July. Cook and Kelly convicted 1863. Major backer of operation unknown.
Manuel Ortez (Bark, 351 t.)	New York	?	Herbert for Appleton Oaksmith & Co.	Oaksmith secured sale in New Bedford, Samuel P. Skinner sailed vessel to New York and transferred to an Englishman (Herbert). Vessel cleared 31 July 1861 with cargo of rum, tobacco, etc. for West Africa. Seized and released on inadequate evidence of vessel's use as an auxiliary to purchase slaves for Oaksmith's *Margaret Scott*.
Margaret Scott (Bark, 300 t.)	New Bedford	Ambrose L. Landre	Samuel P. Skinner for Appleton Oaksmith & Co.	Seized 9 Aug. 1861 and condemned. All involved were arrested.
Lady Suffolk (Bark, 190 t.)	Boston	?	[Benjamin F.?] Cartwright, Newburyport	Seized in Boston, 20 Aug. 1861 upon information of slaving activities. Discontinued and vessel returned to owners Spring 1862.

Sources: S. Ex. Doc. 61, 30th Cong., 2d sess.; H. Ex. Doc. 6, 31st Cong., 2d sess.; S. Ex. Doc. 5, 31st Cong., 2d sess.; S. Ex. Doc. 6, 31st Cong., 2d sess.; S. Ex. Doc. 66, 31st Cong., 2d sess.; H. Ex. Doc. 7, 36st Cong., 2d sess.; S. Ex. Doc. 40, 37st Cong., 2d sess.; S. Ex. Doc. 53, 37st Cong., 2d sess.; Criminal Dockets: USDC, CT, Feb. 1859, no.7; USDC, MA, Dec. 1862, no. 32; USCC, East PA, April, 1848; USDC, CT, Dec. 1866, no. 23; USDC, CT, Sept. 1863, no. 42; USCC, CT, Oct. 1863, no. 190; USDC, MA, March 1862, no. 46; USDC, MA, Dec. 1862, no. 27; USDC, MA, March 1862, no. 73; USCC, MA, May 1873, no. 15; USDC, MA, March 1863, no. 45; USDC, MA, Sept. 1861, no. 93; USCC, MA, Oct. 1861, no. 210; USDC, MA, Sept. 1861, no. 43; Registry of vessels, Port of New Bedford, MA; Registry of Vessels, District of New London, CT, vol. 239-241; Customs Records of Salem/ Beverly, MA, vol. 93; List of American Vessels Enrolled/Registered in New York; Charles Walter Agard Papers, Kendall Whaling Museum, Sharon, MA; Phoebe E. H. Willets Collections, Cold Spring Harbor Whaling Museum, Long Island, New York; *Whalemen's Shipping List*, New Bedford, MA, 1847-1862 passim; Robert Owen Decker, *Whaling Industry of New London* (York, PA: Liberty Cap Books, 1973), 138-140; Edward Manning, *Six Months on a Slaver* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1879); Warren S. Howard, "The United States Government and the African Slave Trade, 1837-1862," (Ph.D. diss., University of California, Los Angeles, July 1959), and *American Slavers and the Federal Law* (University of California Press, 1963), 214-254; Alexander Starbuck, *The History of the American Whale Fishery* (Secaucus, NJ: Castle Books, 1989).

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The Gold Rush Voyage of the Ship *Pacific*: A Study in Ship Management

CHARLES R. SCHULTZ

By the time President James K. Polk formally announced it in his 5 December 1848 State of the Union address, rumor of the discovery of gold in California had spread throughout much of the eastern United States, and some individuals and groups were already making preparations for expeditions to El Dorado. The excitement of the time and the desire of hundreds of young men to get to California made it possible for some individuals of questionable character to enter into the business of transporting people and freight on the 18,000-mile voyage around Cape Horn to San Francisco. Among such individuals were Frederick Griffing and Hall J. Tibbits, who purchased the six-year-old packet ship *Pacific* and advertised that she would sail on 5 January 1849 under Tibbets's command.[1] Although her departure was delayed nearly three weeks by bad weather and legal complications, the *Pacific* was still among the earliest of the more than 750 American vessels of all types and sizes to sail from North American ports for California in 1849. As the nation's largest and most active port, New York witnessed more departures than any other.

Griffing and Tibbits employed Joseph Kissam of 33 William Street as their agent to sign on passengers and take in freight. Nonetheless, Tibbits appears to have been on board or around the ship much of the time, and Griffing appears to have been in his office regularly. The agent and owners told prospective passengers who visited the ship that they would take only fifty passengers in the first cabin. They showed visitors an area between decks at the stern and told them that staterooms, each to be six feet by six feet, would be built along the sides at the stern of the ship and that the center part of the area would be left open for ventilation and for the comfort of the passengers. Two persons would occupy each stateroom, and a bulkhead would be constructed between this area and the forward part of the ship. Prospective passengers also learned that the cost was $300 per person rather than the normal $250 because everything in the *Pacific* would be first class. They were told they could bring on board without charge baggage equal in bulk to three barrels and a reasonable amount of freight at usual prices, and that the owner would not take so much other freight as to inconvenience the passengers. Kissam further informed them that the ship was filling up rapidly and that they would have to pay the full $300 in advance in order to be sure of having a place.[2]

The winter of 1849 was a very severe one that greatly disrupted shipping schedules along much of the eastern seaboard. Most ships bound for California were delayed anywhere from a few days to a few weeks because of weather. The *Pacific* was one such vessel, but there were other reasons for her delay. When some of the passengers approached the vessel about 5 January to bring their freight and baggage on board, they made some disturbing discoveries. The supposedly spacious cabin in which no more than fifty passengers were supposed to be housed was now fitted up to house seventy-two men without an increase in the overall space. They also learned that some passengers had paid only $275 and that the best of the staterooms had already been assigned, supposedly to the

1. The New York *Daily Tribune* of 16 December 1848 touted the *Pacific* (531 tons) as a "superior fast sailing ship." The *Tribune* also noted that "the superiority of this vessel will insure her a preference over most others." The *Pacific* was built in Newbury, Massachusetts in 1843 in the shipyard of John Currier, Jr. Her dimensions were 138 feet in length, 28 feet 11 inches in breadth, and 14 feet 5½ inches in depth. Her tonnage was 531 2/95. When later measurement rules were adopted in the 1860s, her dimensions were changed to 135.9 feet in length, 28.9 feet in breadth, and 20.5 feet in depth, and her tonnage was increased to 635.49.

2. This information comes from the statements by Frank Cheney, Charles D. Cleveland, Elijah B. Galusha, Elon C. Galusha, Judson Galusha, Henry D. Kingsbury, Anson A. Nicholson, and Owen Spencer in their lawsuits filed between 19 and 22 January 1849 against the ship *Pacific* and her owners in the U.S. District Court in the Southern District of New York. The records are in the National Archives - Northeast Region, Bayonne, NJ, case numbers 6-224, 6-227, 6-230, 6-232, 6-236, 6-237, and 1-47.

members of the New England Mining and Trading Company.[3] In addition, the center portion of the cabin was so filled with freight that ventilation and comfort would be severely affected.

Several passengers asked to have their passage money refunded, arguing that the owners had broken the contract and that their health and lives would be endangered by sailing in the *Pacific* as crowded as she was with passengers and as burdened as she was with freight. When the owners refused to refund the passage money, eight of the passengers took legal action to obtain it. In doing so, they asked for the $300 in passage money plus interest as well as whatever they had spent on baggage and freight. Where total amounts were specified, they were $800 or more. Four passengers filed their suits on 19 January and two others filed on 20 and 22 January. Judge Samuel R. Betts of the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York ordered the U.S. marshal to seize and hold the ship and the owners until the cases could be tried on 6 February 1849. The owners, Griffing and Tibbits, appeared at the court shortly before closing time on 22 January and posted bond in each of the cases, and the court released the vessel. Almost immediately the owners told all the passengers they could find to get on board and secured a steamer to tow the *Pacific* down the bay far enough to be beyond the reach of federal authorities. In spite of the hurried departure, there were people at the wharf to see the *Pacific* off, and they and the passengers exchanged traditional cheers as the vessel left the dock at two o'clock. Some passengers had to follow the *Pacific* in other steamers and others boarded her the next morning along with Captain Tibbits. The eight who filed lawsuits remained in New York. A series of legal maneuvers by the attorneys for Tibbits and Griffing extended the cases until 3 July 1849, when Judge Betts ruled in favor of the plaintiffs and ordered the defendants to refund the $300 plus interest from 1 January 1849 to the eight plaintiffs. The attorneys made a fruitless appeal to the superior court.[4]

One passenger's description of his stateroom shows that the litigants had legitimate complaints:

> I . . . find it difficult to write here in this little filthy cell, where a dim glimmer through a deck-light, half of the time covered by somebody's foot, shows the damp mold and profound ugliness of this place we call our room. On one side are two shelves, six feet long and thirty inches wide, with an upright board in front about a foot high, making of the whole a couple of troughs, in which are moss mattresses of the consistency of a pine board, and one inch and a quarter thick, pillows of similar proportions, and a blanket. These constitute collectively what we call our berths. Over the upper one are pieces of old sail-cloth, fastened by one edge to the deck overhead, and by the other down the ship's side to conduct the water that leaks from the deck down clear of our beds. At one end of this room hang various vicissitudes of clothing. Above this is a shelf for books and traps; below is a large chest, upon which I am seated. Before this is my large trunk, upon which is a stool serving me for a writing desk. On the side opposite hang towels and various implements of death, and below there are divers boxes and clothing bags. On the remaining side is the doorway; at the right of this is a broken looking-glass, which my roommate put his hand through early in the voyage (but a fragment still remains), and tooth brushes, other brushes, and a small box shelf containing little notions in frequent requisition; overhead are hung guns, demijons, and other firearms. The unoccupied space on the floor is two by three feet. We call this our stateroom; I don't know why, unless it is because it is a stateroom — so the Captain called it, when we paid our passage money.[5]

Very soon after they left New York, some of the passengers recognized that they might well be in for some unpleasant experiences. One noted on 23 January that they "dined at 3 pm if it so could be called. The remembrance of which will never be forgotten — about one half could be seated for want of room, the remainder were fortunate if they succeeded in getting hold of any of the catch."[6] As

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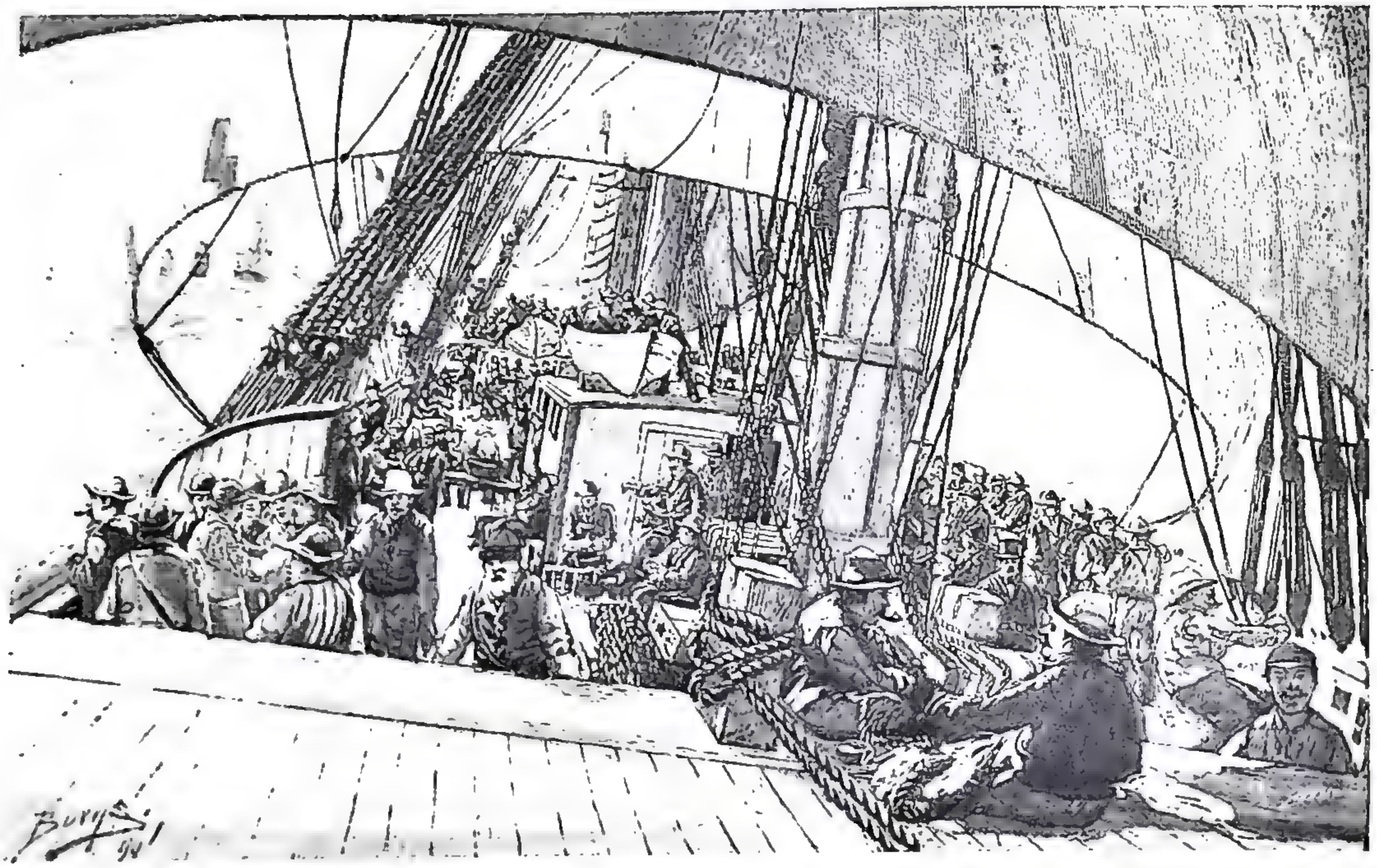
3. This group was organized on 19 December 1848 in New York City. N. D. Morgan was elected president, Hiram Bingham vice president, and N. R. Masten secretary treasurer. (This information was provided by John B. Goodman III of Beverly Hills, California.) J. Ross Browne, *Letters, Journals and Writings*, ed. Lina Fergusson Browne (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1969), 70-71, identifies this group as the privileged ones. The passengers who filed lawsuits did not identify them other than making mention of a Morgan group which had purchased passage. In a letter that J. D. B. Stillman wrote to his brother during February 1849 while sailing from New York to Rio de Janeiro, he mentioned that there were two additional companies of men from Hartford on board but failed to give the names of them. (J. D. B. Stillman to his brother, February 1849, MS 3126, California Historical Society Library, San Francisco, California.)

4. Statements of Frank Cheney, Charles D. Cleveland, Elijah B. Galusha, Elon C. Galusha, Judson Galusha, Henry D. Kingsbury, Anson A. Nicholson, and Owen Spencer and other documents relating to the eight cases in the National Archives - Northeast Region; Browne, *Letters, Journals and Writings*, 70-71; Anonymous, Journal, 22 January - 5 August 1849, of a voyage from New York to San Francisco in the ship *Pacific*, 22 January 1849 (call number C-F216), Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley, California; and James H. Gager, Journal, 22 January - 5 August 1849, of a voyage from New York to San Francisco in the ship *Pacific*, 22 January 1849, Society of California Pioneers Library, San Francisco, California.

5. Jacob D. B. Stillman, *Seeking the Golden Fleece* (San Francisco: A. Roman and Company, 1877), 81-82.

6. Addison S. Clark, Journal, 22 January - 5 December 1849 of a voyage from New York to San Francisco in the ship *Pacific*, Rutgers University Libraries, New Brunswick, New Jersey.



This illustration entitled "Fair Weather" might exaggerate the number of people on board or vessels in sight, but passengers frequently wrote about crowded conditions on deck during fair weather, and there was always excitement when other vessels were sighted. From Willard B. Farwell, "Cape Horn and Cooperative Mining in '49," *Century Magazine* (July 1891): 561.

Captain Tibbits and his partner Frederick Griffing and a few passengers were boarding the *Pacific* late at night on 22 January, a bag fell overboard. One of the passengers thought it was the one of his which contained all of his clothes. He pleaded with Captain Tibbits to lower a boat to retrieve the bag. The captain's response was "Go to h__l with your baggage. . . . Why don't you take care of it?" The next day, at least some of the passengers were pleased to hear that the lost bag belonged to the captain.[7] After they had been at sea for about two weeks, some passengers in the first cabin wanted to cut a hole in the bulkhead which separated them from the second class passengers in the forward part of the ship to improve ventilation. When a second-class passenger objected because such a hole would let the bad air into his section, "the Captain flew into a passion and cursed him damning all passengers generally, and swearing they might all go to the devil for any further trouble he would take to promote their comfort."[8] Another passenger was critical of Griffing, noting that "physically, mentally and morally, he is the very impersonation of littleness, meanness and cupidity. He is a small man, with a cunning wrinkled up eye, and a devilish deceit on his lips. Not a spark of truth or manliness is in his nature."[9]

Just exactly how many people were on board the *Pacific* during her passage from New York to San Francisco may never be known. One passenger stated there were about 120 "souls on board, including the captain, officers and crew." He added that 63 passengers were in the first cabin (the area which plaintiffs said was to house 72) and 30 in the second cabin. He also noted that the officers and a few passengers occupied a round house on deck and that Captain Tibbits and Frederick Griffing and their wives and three children occupied a small cabin, presumably on deck.[10] Another passenger listed 64 cabin passengers,[11] while another included 94 names in a book published many years after the gold rush. The author of yet another

7. Stillman, *Seeking the Golden Fleece*, 36.
8. Browne, *Letters, Journals and Writings*, 79.
9. Ibid., 72.
10. Ibid., 71.
11. Charles H. Williams, Journal, 22 January - 5 August 1849, of a voyage from New York to San Francisco in the ship *Pacific*, Boston Public Library, Boston, Massachusetts. A typescript copy of this journal is at the Huntington Library, San Moreno, California, and includes the list at end of the volume.

book on the gold rush, which included names of passengers in many vessels, also listed 94 names, but each has names not included in the other's list.[12] One New York newspaper list contains 99 names but gives the total number of passengers as 101.[13] Some of these lists included the names of four or more of the eight passengers who remained behind after they filed suit against the *Pacific* and her owners. The return of the U.S. consul at Rio de Janeiro of vessels arriving at that port between 1 January and 3 June 1849 notes a crew of 25 Americans and three foreign sailors.[14] Whatever the actual number really was may not be as important as the fact that it far exceeded the number that some of the prospective passengers were told would be taken. Furthermore, the statement of one passenger that the agent and owners "refused upwards of a hundred passengers at three hundred dollars each"[15] shows that she could have taken even more.

Throughout the period between 22 January, when the *Pacific* sailed from New York, and 28 March 1849, there was frequent tension or conflict between Captain Tibbits and one or more of his passengers. It is difficult to determine with certainty who was at fault, but the captain and his partner Griffing must certainly bear much of the blame. Tibbits apparently had little previous experience carrying passengers, at least not those of the nature and background as the ones on board the *Pacific*. He did have experience with sailors, however, and seems to have treated the passengers on board the *Pacific* just as he treated the crew. He tried to rule them with an iron fist.[16]

12. Stillman, *Seeking the Golden Fleece*, 280-281; C. W. Haskins, *The Argonauts of California* (New York: Fords, Howard and Hulbert, 1890), 445.

13. New York *Daily Tribune*, 25 January 1849, p. 1, col. 6.

14. Consular Despatches from Rio de Janeiro, 5 June 1849 - 27 December 1850, Microfilm T174, reel 14, National Archives and Records Administration, Washington, D.C. (hereafter NA).

15. Browne, *Letters, Journals and Writings*, 69.

16. In a long letter to his brother, J. D. B. Stillman noted that Tibbits had been a captain for thirty years and had never had an accident. He also noted that he had a "commanding appearance and understands his profession well but is no gentleman . . . his knowledge of men is small." He added that Tibbits was "a most vigilant officer" who was "sometimes kind, often very tyrannical." J. Ross Browne acknowledged that the captain was "a man of standing and high respectability" but added that "like all men who have long exercised arbitrary authority at sea excitable and at times blunt and despotic." Browne's "only objection" to Tibbits was "that he damns all sailors as dogs, uses his power with a kind of ferocity sometimes brutal, and exacts, or endeavors to exact, unreasonable submission from the passengers" (Browne, *Letters, Journals and Writings*, 71-72). In characterizing those who went to California early in 1849, Stillman quoted the New York *Tribune* of 26 January 1849: "The class of our citizens which is leaving us for El Dorado is of the better sort, well educated, industrious and respectable, such as we regret to part with" (Stillman, *Seeking the Golden Fleece*, 33). Frederick Griffing was a member of a prominent New York family and became a wealthy and significant merchant in San Francisco.

One of the major conflicts between the Captain and his passengers, at least those in the first cabin, was over food. By the end of the first week at sea, passengers were complaining bitterly about both the quality and the quantity of food, about how it was prepared and served, and about how poorly the dishes and the cabin were being cleaned. On 2 February the passengers in the first cabin "had a grand indignation meeting . . . in reference to our fare, etc."[17] They appointed a committee of J. Ross Browne, Nathan D. Morgan, and Hiram Bingham to "draw up a remonstrance" which was adopted the next day and presented to Captain Tibbits.[18] In the document the passengers first attempted to flatter the captain with flowery language and play to his ego. They recognized that someone had to be in charge but said that they wanted only what they had every right to expect and for which they had paid a premium price. Then they lowered the boom with the following "respectful remonstrance":

> 1. That since we left the port of New York we have not had such fare as is usually allowed to seamen before the mast in merchant service. Making due allowance for unfavorable weather, we further state that our food had been inferior in quantity, quality and variety to the usual Navy rations.
>
> 2. That at no time during the past twelve days have we had a sufficient quantity of rice properly cooked.
>
> 3. That our tea and coffee are of the worst quality and proper attention is not paid to the manner in which the same are made and served.
>
> 4. That we have on no single occasion had hot bread, pancakes, biscuits, light bread, or flour in a fresh state, such as passengers on all voyages usually received and have a right to expect at least once a day.
>
> 5. That we have had no flour pudding, dumpling or pies such as the law allows to seamen at least twice a week, and common usage to cabin passengers every day.
>
> 6. That we have had but two meals a day, a regulation unknown to any of us who have heretofore been to sea.
>
> 7. That there has been a degree of filth and negligence in the appurtenances and arrangements of our table calculated to disgust and demoralize us.
>
> 8. That we have scarcely on any occasion had a sufficient quantity of such food as we could eat with relish and with proper regard for ourselves as human beings.
>
> 9. That the mixture of different articles of food on our plates without reference to our tastes or desire is unusual and contrary to our wishes.

17. Charles H. Williams, Journal, 2 February 1849.

18. Stillman, *Seeking the Golden Fleece*, 39.

10. That we have not had our meals at usual or regular hours; and that it is the unanimous desire of all the passengers to breakfast at eight, dine at two, and take tea in the ordinary way to seven o'clock.

11. That there are some of the passengers who for suitable remuneration would be willing to assist in the preparation of our meals and the arrangement of the table, provided there is not a sufficient number of persons employed at present for that purpose.

12. That we are all in favor of a proper gentlemanly demeanor at table, and that any haste or confusion which may have occurred is to be attributed to the unjustifiable scarcity of good provisions.[19]

The passengers then chose a committee chaired by James Morgan to present the remonstrance to Captain Tibbits. The captain's initial response was: "What the hell is it? . . . I want none of your damned petitions! . . . Damn you! . . . You may all go to hell. . . . I'll put any man in irons that makes difficulty aboard. If you attempt to raise any difficulty with me, blast you, I'll put a match to the powder magazine and blow you all to hell!"[20] Another passenger recalled hearing the proceedings as follows: "You may go to hell with your papers. I will be d____d, but I will be master of my own ship. I have been master of ship _____ years and I do not want any one to teach me my duty. I'll put the ship under double reefed top-sails. There are provisions on board for six years, you shall eat beans and junk and junk and beans and be damned to you. . . . We shall see who will be master of this ship by God!"[21]

Quite soon after these outbursts Captain Tibbits cooled down, shook hands with those who tendered the petition, and promised to correct all of the problems. The passengers were so pleased at this that they gave the captain three hearty cheers. For a few days there was considerable improvement in both the quality and the quantity of food served the first cabin passengers. Tibbits even ate some of his meals with the first cabin passengers for the next few days. Fairly quickly, however, complaints about food surfaced again. Consequently, on 15 February Captain Tibbits posted the following notice: "Bill of Fare: Monday, beef and pudding; Tuesday, pork and beans and apples; Wednesday, ham and rice; Thursday, beef and pudding; Friday, pork and beans and apples; Saturday, ham and rice; and the Captain will not consider himself called upon to do anything for the accommodation of any passenger." When asked why no pickles or other vegetables were provided, the Captain replied that "he intended to keep them until we got the scurvy!"[22] This bill of fare is obviously for the noon meal only. Why no meal was identified for Sunday is not known. Only one of the passengers expressed a concern over it.

Food continued to be a cause for complaint all the way to Rio de Janeiro. Shortly before they arrived at that port one passenger commented:

> This morning, our breakfast was ham, mush and molasses, and vinegar; the mush was raw and without salt, and we would not accept it. The imposition that has been played upon us has been borne with much grumbling, but now we are roused. We paid $300 each, for our passage; by our agreement, we were to have good cabin fare, to eat at the same table with the owners . . . . and their families. Instead of this we were herded together like a mass of convicts, damned and abused from one side of the ship to the other. The general temper of the passengers is mutinous, and there is danger of violence on a slight provocation.[23]

This rather veiled threat would soon erupt into a full-scale revolution.

It is perhaps worth restating that all of the conflict over food seems to have involved only the passengers in the first cabin. Those in the second cabin seem to have fared better for a variety of reasons, if one observer was correct. One first cabin passenger expressed regret that he "did not go in the forward cabin on the score of comfort and expense. Those that understand managing have laid in all sorts of nice things and having a cook for themselves live very comfortable as I often find, as I have a few valuable acquaintances, and am quite the envy of my

19. Remonstrance of the passengers on board the ship *Pacific*, 4 February 1849, Consular Despatches from Rio de Janeiro, 5 January - 4 May 1849, Microfilm T174, reel 13, NA. Forty-three of the sixty-four passengers in the first cabin signed the remonstrance, which is also included in Browne, *Letters, Journals and Writings*, 75-76.

20. Browne, *Letters, Journals and Writings*, 77.

21. Statement of J. D. B. Stillman, passenger on board the ship *Pacific*, to Gorham Parks, U. S. Consul at Rio de Janeiro, Consular Despatches from Rio de Janeiro, 5 January - 4 May 1849, Microfilm T174, reel 13, NA. The number of years Tibbits had been a master is not given in the original.

22. Stillman, *Seeking the Golden Fleece*, 37. Charles H. Williams has a similar "bill of fare" in his journal under the date of 16 February. He listed the same meals but on different days and concluded his entry for the day with the satirical comment "certainly enough to make landsmen's mouths water." Addison S. Clark included an identical bill of fare in his journal but noted erroneously that it was supposed to be for the portion of the passage between Rio de Janeiro and San Francisco. A bill of fare identical to that of Charles H. Williams and Addison S. Clark is included in a letter of 18 February 1849 from Dr. Henry W. Jones to his mother, Mrs. Ann Jones of New York. This letter is included in the Consular Despatches from Rio de Janeiro, 5 June 1849 - 27 December 1850, Microfilm T174, reel 14, NA. James H. Gager wrote on 15 February "Captain Boreas issued the following Bill of fare for the Balance of the Voyage." Then he repeated what was listed and commented "He says nothing of Sunday in the Bill. Quere?" Boreas was the mythological god of the north wind.

23. Stillman, *Seeking the Golden Fleece*, 49-50.

companions, luxuriating as I do occasionally in hot rolls, fritters, pancakes, sausages, good tea and coffee." Another first cabin passenger occasionally mentioned spending time and eating in the second cabin where the coffee was good and the meals were sometimes "luxurious."[24]

One other incident, although isolated, served to incite the passengers against Captain Tibbits during the early part of the voyage. There were two black men on board the *Pacific* who seem to have agreed to serve as waiters in order to pay their way to California. One was named Charles or Charley and had long been a family domestic servant of Williams K. Sherwood of New York, a member of the New England Mining and Trading Company. The other was named Primus and was a servant of a Hartford company of which C. N. Humphreys was president. On 15 February Captain Tibbits saw both men apparently relaxing and "took a rope's end to them." Both Sherwood and Humphreys objected to the captain's action. Captain Tibbits response was almost predictable. He said he would flog whomever and "whenever I damn please. I'll show you that I'm master of this ship." The captain then posted the following notice on the caboose: "Any person or persons on board the ship *Pacific* during her voyage to California that interferes with the authority of the Captain, will be put in irons and so kept during the Captain's pleasure."[25] Although this was apparently an isolated incident, it added fuel to the conflict that was brewing between the passengers and Captain Tibbits.

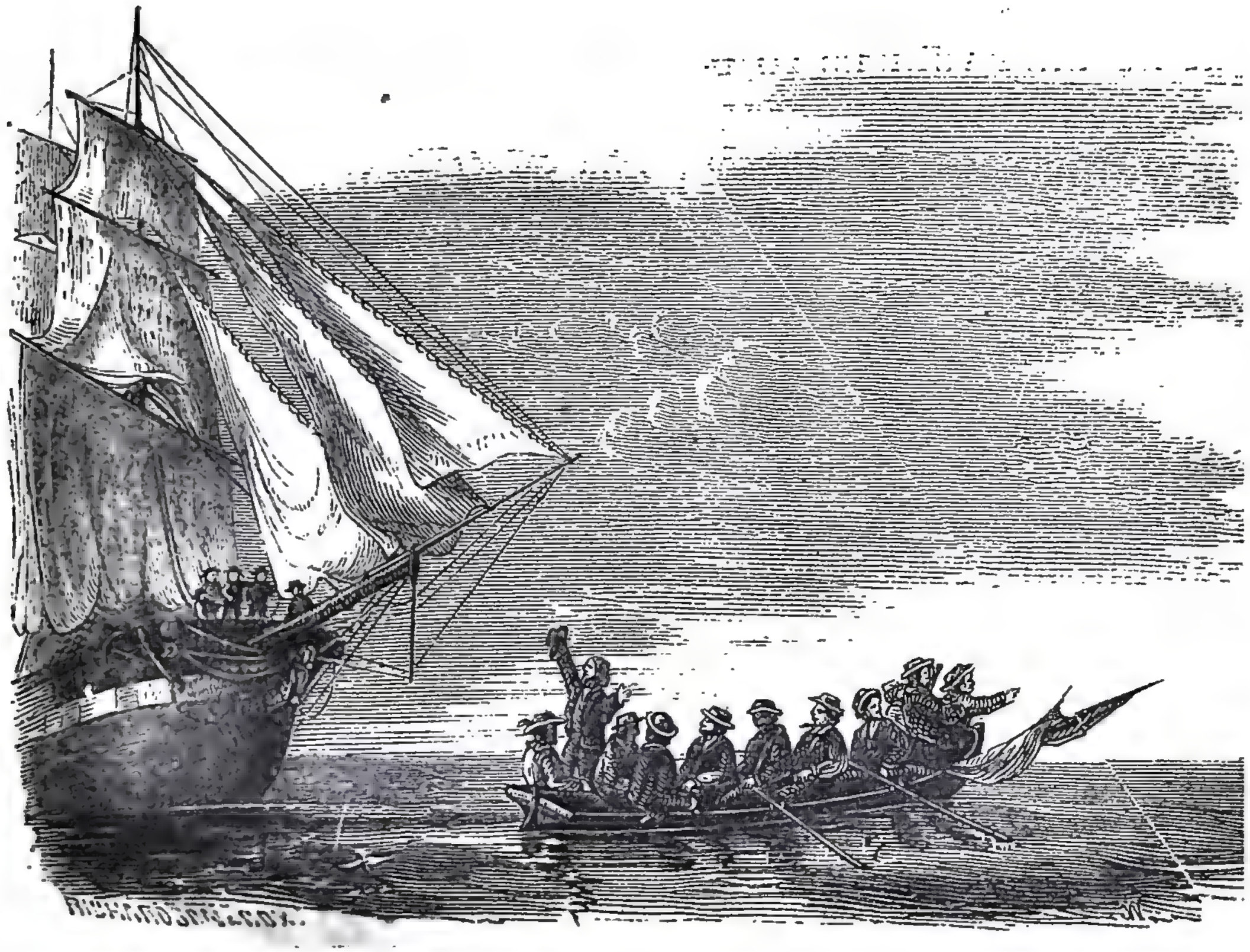
By the time they reached Rio de Janeiro on 5 March 1849, the passengers in the first cabin appear to have concluded to take firm action to obtain redress for their grievances. A series of meetings was held among the passengers, between the passengers and Captain Tibbits, and between the passengers and U.S. Consul Gorham Parks. About 15 March the opposing parties seem to have reached a verbal agreement for the continuation of the voyage with Tibbits in command and agreed to sign it the next day. The agreement called for the passengers to be treated as gentlemen and first-class passengers, for them to have reasonable freedom to move about the deck, for provisions to be made for all sixty-four of the first cabin passengers to sit down to their meals at the same time, for the owners to provide abundant quantities of a variety of fresh and other provisions as well as plenty of cooks to prepare them and waiters to serve them, for the meals to be served at regular hours of eight, two, and six or seven o'clock, for the owners to provide specified foods at each meal, for adequate provisions for cleanliness and proper ventilation in the cabin, for adequate light in the cabin and staterooms, for an adequate quantity of good-quality drinking water in the cabin at all times, for the passengers to be quiet at specific times for the captain's naps, for accepted procedures to be followed in speaking to other vessels, for passengers in both cabins to be able to visit freely with each other, and for no smoking between decks.[26] This agreement was to be signed on 16 March, but on the previous evening a rumor was circulated that Captain Tibbits planned to take the *Pacific* to sea without securing the necessary provisions and personnel to carry out the agreement. The first cabin passengers pursued a variety of avenues, including inducing the Brazilian authorities to hold the *Pacific* by force if Captain Tibbits actually attempted to sail on 16 March. In spite of Tibbits's denials, some credence must be given to the rumor since the *Pacific* was cleared to depart on 16 March 1849. At any rate, the rumor was enough to put an end to compromise efforts and to cause the first cabin passengers to pursue vigorously the removal of Tibbits as captain.[27]

24. Charles H. Williams, Journal, 19 February 1849. On 30 January and 11 February 1849, he mentioned having dined in the forward, or second, cabin although he was an occupant of the rear, or first, cabin. See also James H. Gager, Journal, 1 and 20 February 1849.

25. Stillman, *Seeking the Golden Fleece*, 40, and letter to his brother, California Historical Society; Browne, *Letters, Journals and Writings*, 78-79. Stillman appears to have been upset by this action of Captain Tibbits and indicates that other passengers felt the same way. Browne, on the other hand, felt the punishment was deserved because of the insolence of the two men towards the passengers. Of course, Browne had been on a whaling voyage under a tyrannical captain and had witnessed such discipline. None of the others mentioned the incident. The anonymous writer of the journal at the Bancroft Library mentions a flogging of "Mr. Sherwood's servant, Charles" on 16 May 1849. He adds "the alleged cause — insolence — the justifiable cause being *a black man*" (emphasis in original). No other journalist mentioned this incident.

26. Proposed rules and regulations, 15 March 1849, Consular Despatches from Rio de Janeiro, 5 June 1849 - 27 December 1850, Microfilm number T174, reel 14, NA; Hall J. Tibbits, *Statement of Hall J. Tibbits, Master of the American Ship, Pacific, as to his Removal from the Command of Said Ship, by Gorham Parks, U.S. Consul, at Rio de Janeiro* (New York: George F. Nesbitt, 1849), 17-20. There is some indication in this pamphlet that such an agreement was actually signed by Tibbits and forty-two passengers on 23 March 1849. In his *Seeking the Golden Fleece*, J. D. B. Stillman notes that he chaired the committee which worked out this agreement but that the process fatigued him so greatly that he had to resign and was replaced by J. Ross Browne. Some additional information on this proposed agreement is in the Statement of Captain Tibbits, 22 March 1849, enclosed in Tibbits's letter of 25 May 1849 to Secretary of State John Clayton, Consular Despatches from Rio de Janeiro, 5 June 1849 - 27 December 1850, Microfilm number T174, reel 14, NA, and in Tibbits, *Statement*, 20-22.

27. Stillman, *Seeking the Golden Fleece*, 57-63, sheds some light on the negotiations. Unfortunately, he does not have journal entries for each day but rather has entries in which he describes the activities occurring over a period of days. More information on the negotiations appears in the anonymous journal. The writer of this volume was a supporter of Tibbits and started an abortive countermovement after it first appeared that the compromise would fail. From his account it appears that not all the names which appeared on some documents were actual signatures but were rather names written by other parties, sometimes without the knowledge of the person whose name was written. Unfortunately,



"Leaving the Ship," from J. Ross Browne, *Crusoe's Island* (New York: Harber and Brothers, 1864), 13, shows the group of men who left the *Pacific* on 18 May 1849 to row to Juan Fernandez Island, seventy miles away from the ship. A portion of *Crusoe's Island* is Browne's fictionalized account of the 1849 voyage of the *Pacific* to California.

Following the failure of the compromise, petitions signed by varying numbers of individuals demanding the removal of Tibbits as captain were submitted to Gorham Parks on 17 and 23 March. In the first, the passengers indicated that they could not depend on Tibbits's word, either verbal or written. Therefore, they asked for an investigation into the removal of Tibbits. In the 23 March petition they demanded his removal, citing "insanity, the habitual use of intoxicating liquors, or constitutional infirmity of mind, and ungovernable passion" as reasons and stating that "Tibbits is not always in a sound state of mind or possessed of that prudence, judgment and discretion calculated to ensure our safe arrival in California."[28]

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this writer had only one long entry for the period 5 March - 3 April 1849, so determining specific dates of actions is not possible. James H. Gager mentioned discussions of the propriety of the compromise in his journal on 24 March and notes the general feeling that "they could have deposed him to day, but for the compromise." Later the same day he wrote "The captain is deposed. . . . So much for his tyrannical temper & mean spirit." The clearance date for the *Pacific* appears in the Consular Return of American Vessels arriving at and departing from Rio de Janeiro, from the 1st of January to 30th of June 1849, in Consular Despatches from Rio de Janeiro, 5 June 1849 - 27 December 1850, Microfilm number T174, reel 14, NA.

28. Statement of passengers, 17 March 1849, Consular Despatches from Rio de Janeiro, 5 January - 4 May 1849, Microfilm number T174, reel 13, NA; copy of Statement of Passengers, 17 March 1849, included in a letter, 19 May 1849, from Alfred Jones to Secretary of State John Clayton, reel 14. Both copies contain sixty-two signatures. Statement of Passengers, 23 March 1849, Consular Despatches from Rio de Janeiro, 5 January - 4 May 1849, Microfilm number T174, reel 13, NA, has fifty-four signatures. Copy of Statement of Passengers, 23 March 1849, enclosed in letter, 19 May 1849, from Alfred Jones to Secretary of State John Clayton, reel 14, NA, contains forty-one signatures.

At a later meeting, J. Ross Browne was chosen chairman of a committee to draft charges against Captain Tibbits. The committee produced a document which was approved unanimously by the first cabin passengers and was sent to the Consul Gorham Parks. The charges against Tibbits were as follows:

> 1. He sailed from the port of New York without a suitable number of cooks and waiters, and a sufficient supply of fresh provisions to provide 64 cabin passengers in a proper manner.
>
> 2. He has not allowed us a sufficient quantity of such provisions as we were entitled to, and with which he could have furnished us; nor has he paid sufficient attention to the proper cooking of our food.
>
> 3. He has not paid due attention to the cleanliness of the cabin and staterooms; and he has not provided proper changes of sheets, towels, and other necessary comforts; he has obstructed the circulation of air in the cabin by placing baggage and trunks in the space which should have been allotted to the passengers, thus preventing ventilation and prejudicing their health.
>
> 4. He has refused to remedy our grievances, when submitted to him in a written remonstrance and in the most respectful manner, and he has stated over his own signature that he would have nothing to do with the comfort or cleanliness of anyone of the passengers.
>
> 5. He has repeatedly and without provocation insulted us and outraged our feelings and has treated us on several occasions in an unwarrantable and malicious manner tending to provoke mutiny. He has threatened in the event of any difficulty to set fire to the powder magazine, to place passengers in irons, and to put the ship under double-reefed topsails and keep her at sea nine months.
>
> 6. He has prevented innocent amusements at proper hours, and threatened to drive spikes in the decks to compel the passengers to keep off.
>
> 7. From the unprovoked outrages which he has committed upon us and the weakness and folly of his general conduct, we believe him to be habitually under the influence of ardent spirits or of infirmity of temper.
>
> 8. He has promised to provide supplies of fresh provisions before leaving this port, and has evinced an intention to evade or violate such promise by preparing to go to sea without providing articles as specified, and without notifying passengers of his intention to sail, and obtaining his papers for the custom house and the American consul before settling difficulties which he had promised to arrange.
>
> 9. That whilst our general demeanor has been peaceable, forbearing and respectful toward the said Tibbits, his conduct has been profane, brutal and tyrannical, and such as to degrade us and render our condition slavish and unhappy; that he has been subject to fits of passion, during which he has proved himself unfit to command a vessel without endangering the lives of all on board; and that from all these causes we have lost all confidence in his veracity, prudence and discretion.
>
> 10. He has grossly insulted American vessels on the high seas by refusing to answer the usual salutations; violated the usages customary in passing vessels, and caused the American flag to be disgraced by a foreign vessel off the harbor of Rio.[29]

Captain Tibbits seems to have ignored completely the charges made by the passengers against him. Instead, he leveled a series of a dozen charges against them, which their committee headed by J. Ross Browne answered in considerable detail. In answer to the charge of daily giving liquor to the officers and seaman, the passengers admitted having occasionally offered the first officer a glass of brandy and that on one occasion two seamen became intoxicated on liquor provided by passengers. The committee admitted that a few inexperienced passengers may have talked to the steersman early in the passage but contended that the captain's charge that it was a daily practice had no validity. Concerning Tibbits' charge that the passengers daily listened to the conversations of two of their number who had been to sea, they replied they considered they had every right to engage in such conversation. The passengers denied that there was interference with the captain's authority when one or more of them objected to his flogging of servants. They indicated that there was no general support for the one passenger who objected strongly to the flogging and asked Tibbits to refrain from repeating such action. In response to his charge that they made noises such as shouting, singing, and loud talking after sunset, thereby denying the ship's company necessary rest, the passengers admitted singing on deck in the evenings early in the voyage but added that they were never loud. They added that it was Tibbits himself who did the loud talking and disturbed their rest. Tibbits charged passengers with exposing their naked persons after sunrise to his family and that of Frederick Griffing, as well as to all hands, even after he told them it was improper. They replied that they bathed to preserve their health and denied that they were ever in the view of anyone abaft the foremast. In response to the charge that they brought beds on deck to sleep, the passengers said that they were only following the example of Captain Tibbits and his son, who did the same thing. Besides, the air in the cabin was so impure that they considered it a

29. Charges of passengers against Captain Tibbits, Consular Despatches from Rio de Janeiro, 5 January - 4 May 1849, Microfilm T174, reel 13, NA. Additional copies are in the statement of J. Ross Browne to Gorham Parks on the same reel, in a letter of 19 May 1849 from Alfred Jones of New York, New York, to Secretary of State John Clayton on reel 14, at the back of the journal of Addison S. Clark, and in J. Ross Browne, *Letters, Journals and Writings*, 94-96.

health hazard. In response to the charge of removing washstands from their staterooms, the passengers said that the washstands took up space needed more for baggage and contended that Tibbits not only sanctioned their removal but also helped remove them. They saw this as an unusual spirit of accommodation on the part of the captain. Tibbits contended that playing cards and games on deck and associating with second cabin passengers was a great hindrance. The passengers responded that they were unaware of any rules which should cause them to abstain from enjoying a game of cards or socializing with a friend in another part of the ship. In response to the charge that bringing chairs and settees on deck hindered the working of the ship and resulted in the destruction of many of them, the passengers noted that Tibbits and his family frequently occupied several of them and most of the destruction and loss was caused by Tibbits himself heaving them overboard. They felt that, having paid $300 for the passage, they should not have to put away such furniture after having used it. Tibbits charged they had destroyed many boards by making alterations in their staterooms. Passengers responded that he had given permission to cut holes in partitions and bulkheads to improve air circulation. In response to the assertion that they used such stores as sugar, molasses, vinegar, biscuit, and butter "at all times of the day and night," the passengers noted that they had no access to such stores and added that much of the time they were given only two meals per day rather than the customary three. In conclusion, the passengers noted that Tibbits's charges were "puerile, incoherent and frivolous and in no way calculated to change" their position. They wanted him removed and a new captain appointed.[30]

Consul Parks conducted a very thorough investigation of the matter, taking statements in opposition to and in support of Tibbits from many individuals, including several from ashore. Among the latter were U.S. Minister David Tod and representatives of three mercantile houses doing business with the United States and having American partners in Rio de Janeiro. There is some evidence that some of the support for Tibbits resulted from a meeting he had with three prominent passengers in which the captain used scare tactics in telling them how long they could be delayed by their attempts to have him removed. Eventually Parks concluded that the preponderance of the evidence supported the removal of Tibbits, and he wrote to the captain on 24 March to inform him that he was being removed. Both Tibbits and Griffing filed formal protests against what they termed to be illegal action by Parks. On 28 March, Parks appointed George Easterbrook as the new captain. On the same day, Easterbrook informed Tibbits that he would not permit him to continue in the *Pacific* as a passenger.[31]

Under normal circumstances this would have been the end of the matter, but 1849 was not a normal year and Hall J. Tibbits was not a normal captain. He immediately booked passage back to New York in the ship *E. Corning*, which departed Rio de Janeiro on 28 March. Upon his arrival in New York, he began a campaign to regain his property and his position as captain of the *Pacific*. Part of his campaign was conducted in New York and part in Washington, D.C. In New York he published a small pamphlet entitled *Statement of Hall J. Tibbits, Master of the American Ship, Pacific, as to His Removal from the Command of Said Ship, by Gorham Parks, U.S. Consul, at Rio de Janeiro*. This volume apparently helped arouse the shipping and insurance interests in the city to send a petition to President Zachary Taylor protesting the removal of Tibbits. Representatives of ten insurance companies and twenty-one merchant and shipping companies signed the petition. In Washington, Tibbits submitted copies of all of the documents pertaining to his case to the secretaries of State and Treasury. He was able to obtain a letter addressed to Captain Alexander V. Fraser, commander of the Revenue Cutter *C. W. Lawrence*, from Secretary of the

30. Charges of Captain Tibbits against the passengers, 22 March 1849, Consular Despatches from Rio de Janeiro, 5 January - 4 May 1849, Microfilm no. T174, reel 13, NA. Twelve charges are given here. Only seven charges are listed in a similar document on reel 14 and in Tibbits, *Statement*, 22-23. Another copy of the charges and the answers are provided in "Answers to the Charges of H. J. Tibbits," a copy enclosed in a letter from Alfred Jones to Secretary of State John Clayton, Microfilm no. T174, reel 14, NA. The answers were prepared by a committee consisting of J. Ross Browne, Dr. Edward Hall, Mark Hopkins, and Dr. Henry W. Jones.

31. Statements in support of and opposition to Tibbits are found throughout the two reels of microfilm of Consular Despatches from Rio de Janeiro, Microfilm no. T174, NA. Statements of support are also included in Tibbits, *Statement*, passim. Parks's letter of 24 March 1849 to Tibbits is on reel 14. Statements of Minister Tod and the representatives of mercantile houses are on reel 13. The letter of appointment of Easterbrook and his letter to Tibbits are on reel 14. A good but somewhat self-supporting summary of the whole process is in a letter of 30 March 1849 from J. Ross Browne to Secretary of State John Clayton on reel 13. Browne provides the evidence of Tibbits's apparent scare tactics with three passengers. It is worth noting at this point that at the same time he removed Tibbits, Parks also removed John A. Brown from command of the ship *Xylon*. Her owners also protested this removal. It is also worth noting that on 29 May, only two months after he removed Tibbits and Brown, Parks was replaced as U.S. Consul at Rio de Janeiro by Edward Kent of Bangor, Maine. Kent sailed from New York in the ship *Maria* on 1 August and took charge of his post at Rio de Janeiro on 1 October 1849. The letter that was obviously written to Parks informing him of his dismissal has not been found, but Kent's letter acknowledging his appointment, his bond, his letter reporting his departure, and Parks's letter reporting turning over the accounts and the archives of the Consulate are all in the Consular Despatches from Rio de Janeiro, 5 June 1849 - 27 December 1850, Microfilm number T174, reel 14, NA.

Although this illustration called "Crossing the Line" is from a later time period (*Harper's Weekly*, 21 August 1875, 690-691), it is a good representation of the types of initiation ceremonies many passengers on vessels bound for California in 1849 described in their diaries.

Treasury William H. Meredith authorizing Fraser "to render such aid and assistance as may be legal, necessary and proper to enable the lawful owners of the ship, *Pacific*, to maintain or regain possession of said vessel." Tibbits sought a stronger letter in which Fraser and/or the Collector of Customs would be instructed to restore him to command of the *Pacific*. Meredith replied that the Collector of Customs in San Francisco knew his duty and would act in conformity with the law. Armed with this letter and information, Tibbits sailed from New York on 25 May 1849 in the steamer *Falcon*, bound for Panama. He crossed Panama and secured passage to San Francisco, reaching that port prior to the arrival of the *Pacific*.[32]

In the meantime, the ship *Pacific* sailed from Rio de Janeiro on 3 April under the new captain, George Easterbrook. The passage around Cape Horn and up the Pacific to San Francisco, with a brief stop at Callao, Peru, for water and fresh provisions, went well. The passengers in the first cabin did little other than eat, sleep, and amuse themselves. When the ship arrived in San Francisco on 5 August, the passengers were surprised to learn that Captain Tibbits was already there. Some were happy while others were chagrined. One passenger reported that:

> Captain Tibbits . . . having been re-instated by the order of the Secretary of State soon came on board and resumed his command. After receiving the congratulations of his *friends*, he turned to the passengers and said, "Gentlemen, you are now in California, your voyage is ended, you can go ashore as soon as you please." Those who had been foremost in effecting his dismissal looked rather troubled in mind. They seemed to feel as if *their* day of retribution had now come. The Captain, however, permitted all to remain on board the ship that day and night whose delicacy (after his *gentle* hint to go ashore) would not be wounded by so doing. To me, he politely tendered the use of my stateroom so long as I chose to occupy it.[33]

32. Petition of New York merchants to President of the U.S. protesting removal of Captain Tibbits, 5 June 1849, Consular Despatches from Rio de Janeiro, 5 June 1849 - 27 December 1850, Microfilm no. T174, reel 14, NA; W. M. Meredith to Alexander V. Fraser, 17 May 1849, Microfilm number T174, reel 14, NA (the letter hand carried by Tibbits); Hall J. Tibbits to John M. Clayton, [19?] May 1849, Microfilm number T174, reel 14, NA; Hall J. Tibbits to W. M. Meredith, 19 May 1849, Records of the Treasury Department, Miscellaneous Letters Received, Series K, 1849, vol. 2, L-Z, and W. M. Meredith to Hall J. Tibbits, 24 May 1849, Records of the Treasury Department, Miscellaneous Letters Sent, Series K, 1849, vol. 13, p. 161. These two volumes are in Records Group 56, Records of the Treasury Department, National Archives, Washington, D.C. (hereafter RG 56, NA).

33. Anonymous, Journal, 5 August 1849.

One of the principle opponents of Captain Tibbits had a very different experience. He reported "Captain Tibbits would give us no food on board, nor would he give us the stores that belonged to the company, and which were on board as freight. The first day after landing we had nothing to eat but salt pork (which we broiled at the camp on the end of sticks) and hard bread; but we felt that we were free men and not slaves." He also wrote about one other passenger who went on board the *Pacific* to look after his freight. Tibbits ordered him off the vessel. The man reminded Tibbits that he had been one of those who protested his removal. Nevertheless, Tibbits grabbed him and threatened to throw him overboard. The man filed a complaint with the alcalde and Tibbits had to pay a fine for his action and threat.[34]

One other passenger recorded his encounter with Tibbits. While the passenger was ashore to pick up his mail, Tibbits boarded the *Pacific* and announced "Now you're in California and you can all go ashore as quick as you please. I'm Captain of this ship!" The passenger added that Tibbits would not furnish a boat or boats for the passengers to go ashore and take their baggage ashore. The ill feelings ashore were so strong against Tibbits that hundreds offered support and others volunteered to join the passenger in boarding the *Pacific* and lynching Tibbits. He finally boarded the *Pacific* and retrieved his baggage without incident, even though he expected a verbal and physical attack from Tibbits at any moment.[35]

Thus the saga of the gold rush voyage of the ship *Pacific* finally closed. It appears as though the first cabin passengers won the battle at Rio de Janeiro in that they were successful in having Tibbits removed as captain and thereby probably had a much more pleasant and enjoyable passage between Rio de Janeiro and San Francisco than they would have had with him in command. Captain Tibbits appears to have won the war, however, since he was able to reclaim his vessel and his command of her, and he apparently was successful in bringing about the removal of two of his principal protagonists, Gorham Parks, U.S. Consul at Rio de Janeiro, and J. Ross Browne, a U.S. Treasury agent in California.

From a passenger's perspective this was probably a very poorly managed venture. Passengers were verbally abused, mistreated, misled, served inadequate quantities of poor-quality food and drinks, and not provided the services promised them. Thus, for at least the first leg of the voyage, the first cabin passengers were very unhappy.

From an owner's perspective, however, this was a well-managed venture. More passengers than anticipated were carried at a premium price. Much more freight than expected was taken, probably also at premium prices. Expenses were kept low by cutting corners on both quality and quantity of food served and on reducing the number of service personnel employed. Thus, the owners probably realized a higher profit than they originally anticipated and undoubtedly were very pleased.

Other than the problems and conflicts between passengers and captain, the voyage of the *Pacific* was very much like those of the more than seven hundred other sailing vessels that departed the east coast of the United States for San Francisco in 1849. When the *Pacific* first sailed, most of the passengers became seasick. During those portions of the voyage that the weather would permit their doing so, at least the first cabin passengers had a worship service on Sunday. Like passengers on other gold rush voyages, the *Pacific* passengers planned and carried out a very elaborate celebration on Independence Day on 4 July 1849 with speeches, toasts, a parade, patriotic music, and a special meal, and they celebrated George Washington's birthday with a special meal and by firing a salute. The passengers engaged in a wide variety of forms of amusement and entertainment, including athletic events, reading, card games, playing practical jokes and tricks upon each other, producing newspapers, listening to music, singing, dancing, catching birds in the colder regions, and shooting birds from on deck.

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34. Stillman, *Seeking the Golden Fleece*, 119-121. The *alcalde* was the chief magistrate.

35. J. Ross Browne, *Letters, Journals and Writings*, 127-128. Browne went to California as an agent of the Treasury Department to prevent the desertion of seamen in San Francisco. It is probably worth noting that Secretary of the Treasury W. M. Meredith wrote to Captain Alexander V. Fraser on 19 June 1849 that Browne's commission was to be revoked and his compensation would stop on 30 June 1849. (Letters on Review Marine and Boats, vol. 10, Records of the Treasury Department, RG 56, NA). This is a little more than three weeks after Tibbits left New York and more than a month before Browne actually arrived in San Francisco to begin his work.

Commandeered: The Recollections of Captain S. C. M. Frandsen

DAVID H. GROVER

Early in 1928, Captain S. C. M. Frandsen of the Yangtze Rapid Steamship Company, an American firm, spent ten days in the gorges of the upper Yangtze River carrying out the orders of the Chinese generals who had commandeered his ship to carry troops retreating up river into Szechwan. His description of the experience appeared in the China Weekly Review, *an American news magazine in Shanghai, on 17 September 1928. The following is a verbatim account of that experience, with editorial interpretations by the author.*

The Yangtze Rapid Steamship Company had the right to operate on the Yangtze River, and to be protected by American gunboats, because of the freedom of trade and the rights of extraterritoriality granted by China during the nineteenth century in the so-called "unequal treaties." The operation of foreign merchant ships on the Yangtze was frequently subject to violent encounters with bandits and/or armies of contending forces, such as the Peking government from the north, the Nationalists from the south, and the Communists from the northwest. These confrontations came in the form of armed attacks, piracy, commandeering, and other hostile acts. What happened to the I'Ping *was typical of the experiences of foreign mariners.*

Following a particularly violent period on the upper Yangtze, the U.S. Navy had asked the Yangtze Rapid Company not to resume service until the safety of American lives and property could be more fully assured. The company demurred, however, and once more sent its ships deep into the dangerous province of Szechwan. To keep its captains from leaving this hazardous service, the company offered the best pay on the Yangtze, generous bonuses for each trip completed, and the opportunity to share in the profits of any illegal cargo such as opium or munitions. This was the milieu in which Captain S. C. M. Frandsen was working when he wrote the following account.

The SS *I'Ping*, belonging to the Yangtze Rapid Steamship Company, an American firm, arrived in Ichang on January 28, 1928, with 176 tons of freight and 30 tons of coal on board. This gave her a draft of eight feet. It was fully expected that the vessel would be laid up for the rest of the winter, as the water was low, and having run for several months without repairs, she needed a thorough overhauling. Everybody on board was looking forward to a short period of rest in Ichang.[1]

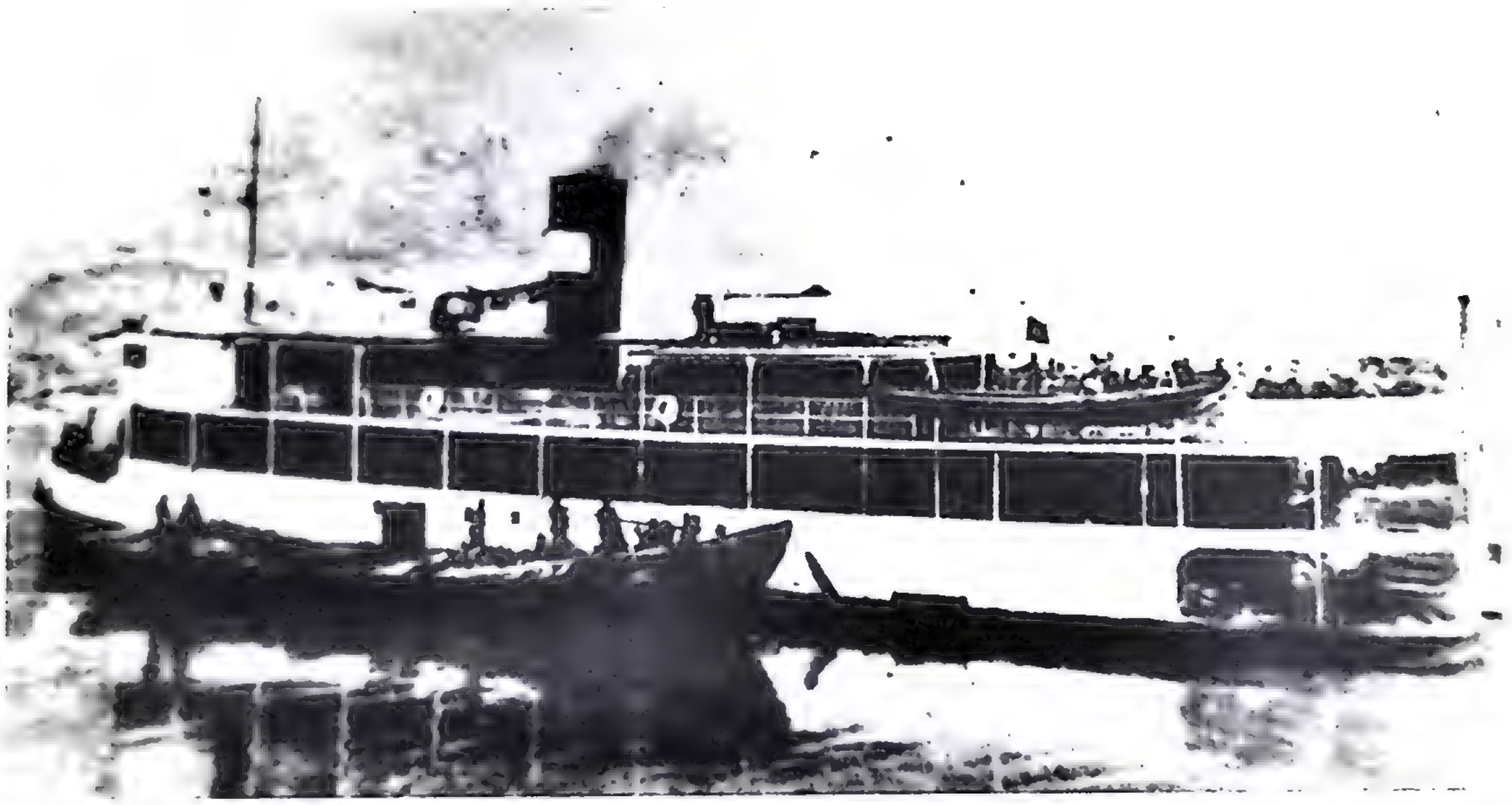
During the afternoon, however, news was received that the ship was commandeered to go down river and pick up General Yang Sen's retreating soldiers, and that coal for the trip would soon come alongside.[2] Twenty tons of coal brought down from Chungking was in the lower hold and could not be gotten at. As the river below Ichang was very low, only sufficient coal was taken on to get us down to Ku Lao Pei and back.

We left Ichang at 1:30 P.M., arriving at Ku Lao Pei[3] at 2:30. The soldiers began to embark immediately. All

1. Although the *I'Ping* was designed to operate year-round on the upper Yangtze between Ichang and Chungking, it was common for such steamers to come down river for part of the winter, sometimes even to Shanghai for an overhaul. The end of January represented dead low water in the river.

2. General Yang Sen was an independent war lord in Szechwan. He had recently been allied with the more powerful Wu Pei-fu, who in turn had supported the northern or Peking forces in their unsuccessful battles in 1927 against the "Northern Expedition" of the Cantonese or Nationalist forces, led by Chiang Kai-Shek. Yang Sen was not particularly xenophobic, but he was pragmatic enough to utilize the wave of that feeling which was sweeping the Yangtze Valley to motivate his troops. The general was now retreating into Szechwan where he could enjoy the safety of distance from the Nationalists.

3. Ku Lao Pei is a village about fifteen miles below Ichang on the left or north bank of a long straight reach of the river.



The *I'Ping* of the Yangtze Rapid Steamship Company was under the command of Captain S. C. M. Frandsen when she was commandeered on the Yangtze in 1928.

were poorly clothed and in a starving and freezing condition. They came on board shouting for shelter and food, and taking whatever they could get their hands on, there being absolutely no discipline. During the night, many conflicting orders from various officers were received. Some wanted us to proceed up river at once and others said wait. Only by reasoning with them, and declaring that we could receive orders from one man only, did we succeed in getting along with them.

About midnight two thousand men were on board and I deemed it wise to proceed before we took any more of a load. Opinion among the officers differed, but we finally got under way and arrived in Ichang at 2:45 in the morning.[4] The soldiers disembarked, but none of my crew were allowed to go ashore. With the greatest of difficulty some of them did manage to get ashore, however, with their clothes which they feared the troops would seize, and buy a little food.

The next morning, Monday, January 30, we proceeded at 9:00 to Ku Lao Pei again, arriving at 10:30. On arrival several launches towing boats were observed coming up from below with the thousands of troops on board. Many [soldiers] were also seen marching up along the opposite bank of the river. These were the last of the fleeing army, and they came rushing on board the *I'Ping* in a panic. Heavy firing was heard outside the village and I was ordered to proceed. We proceeded in short stages picking up soldiers and their baggage. Such was the confusion and rush to get on board that many small boats were overturned and scores of men drowned. All the people in the towns hid for fear of being forced to carry baggage for the army. Soldiers in the boats were frantic to have us pick them up, while those on board the steamer did not want us to delay further. Such was the journey all the way back to Ichang.

We had been told that the troops were to march up river from Ichang and never thought of being commandeered for carrying troops through the gorges. When we returned from this second trip down river, things looked very ugly in Ichang. There were no signs of life on shore, and no one was allowed to leave the vessel. We were ordered to go above the harbor where the SS *Wu Hsing*[5] was anchored with the commanding officer on board. We dropped anchor at 6:30 P.M.

I soon saw plainly that they expected us to take troops up river. I told the officers that I could not go as the vessel was heavily loaded with cargo which was to be discharged in Ichang. The military then commandeered

4. Normally ships did not move after dark on the upper river because of the absence of any lighted navigational aids, the dangers of the rapids, and other hazards.

5. The *Wu Hsing*, as with all otherwise unidentified ships in this account, was a Chinese-owned merchant vessel which had also been commandeered to move troops.

two cargo lighters, but men could not be found to do the discharging and the soldiers would not offer to help. However as there was no one to receive the cargo, I thought it might be best to keep it on board, in spite of the danger of overloading the ship.

I was then ordered to go down to the Asiatic Petroleum installation below the city, and load troops there. I tried to get rid of the lighters alongside, but they were not allowed to leave. I proceeded to the Asiatic Petroleum anchorage in the dark, and by midnight the vessel was crowded with troops. I tried to explain the dangers of overloading the ship, but no one would pay any attention to my advice.

Many conflicting orders about proceeding were received, but about 1:00 A.M. on January 31st, when there was not even standing room on the vessel and the men on board were getting frantic, we got under way, and proceeded back to the *Wu Hsing* for orders.

On Tuesday, January 31st, we got under way at 8:00 A.M. with the lighters still alongside. Soon after we started the chief engineer reported that water was coming in the starboard cargo holds as the vessel was overloaded. Some of the soldiers then got into the lighters. At 11:30 we anchored at Huang Ling Miao[6] in an almost impossible position where vessels would never think of stopping. Such were our orders, however, and there was nothing to do but obey. The SS *Tze Feng*, also loaded with troops, was there. None of the troops went on shore as they were afraid of brigands. We hoped to be able to return to Ichang the same day, but soon learned that we were to have no such luck. The chief engineer succeeded in getting on shore and buying two chickens. When he returned we cooked a meal on the bridge as the galleys were filled with soldiers.[7]

During the afternoon an officer talked to the people of the village, who were on shore, through a megaphone. He was evidently afraid of brigands and "Sacred Soldiers."[8] He told the people that the soldiers had come to give them protection. Finally all the troops disembarked. I was very happy for I thought we could now return to Ichang. I went down to where the *Wu Hsing* was anchored just above Nanto.[9] Here we received orders to carry more troops. I informed General Wang[10] that I had no coal, not telling him of the 20 tons which was still under the cargo. He was angry at this, saying that the chief engineer had refused purposely to take more coal in Ichang. He gave us eight tons from the *Wu Hsing*.

The next day, February 1st, we got under way at 9:50 A.M. I had impressed upon the officers the impossibility of steaming the dangerous Kung Ling Rapid[11] so heavily loaded, and they had promised that the men would disembark just below. When we reached the place, however, they forced me to anchor in an impossible position. In doing so the vessel bumped slightly, and soon a foot and a half of water was reported in number two hold. There was nothing to do but beach the vessel on a nearby sand bank at once. Then the troops disembarked.

Soon I saw a small boat with an American flag, and discovered Captain Blaize of the SS *Chi Nan* in it.[12] His vessel, already heavily loaded with cargo, had been forced to carry troops, and had struck a rock in the Kung Ling Tan. He had succeeded in beaching her just above the rapid. Captain Blaize came on board and we discussed the situation.

We began discharging cargo into the two lighters in order to ascertain the extent of damages and to repair them. I was happy because the vessel could not proceed, and thought that the troops would march from this place. We worked until midnight and then knocked off until morning.

On February 2nd we resumed discharging at daylight. We went to the *Chi Nan* and brought back some food supplies and an awning to be used as a collision mat. Word was then received from General Wang on board the *Wu Hsing* that we must repair the ship and proceed as soon as possible. The compradore[13] and myself went up to see General Wang at Miaho[14] and assure him that we were doing all that could possibly be done, but we found it impossible to get an interview.

On our way back we visited the *Chi Nan*, and seeing that she could not be repaired without more salvaging material, and realizing that she could not sink, Captain

6. This spot is located twenty-one miles above Ichang. The mileages on the river are taken from Ichang as the reference point.

7. All officers and crew of the *I'Ping* were Chinese except for the captain.

8. "Sacred Soldiers," also known as "Red Spears," were members of an order called the Buddhistic Brotherhood of Sacred Soldiers of the Virtuous Way. They were volunteers but nonetheless militant part-time defenders of life and property along the river, feared by bandits and professional soldiers alike.

9. Nanto is sixteen miles above Ichang.

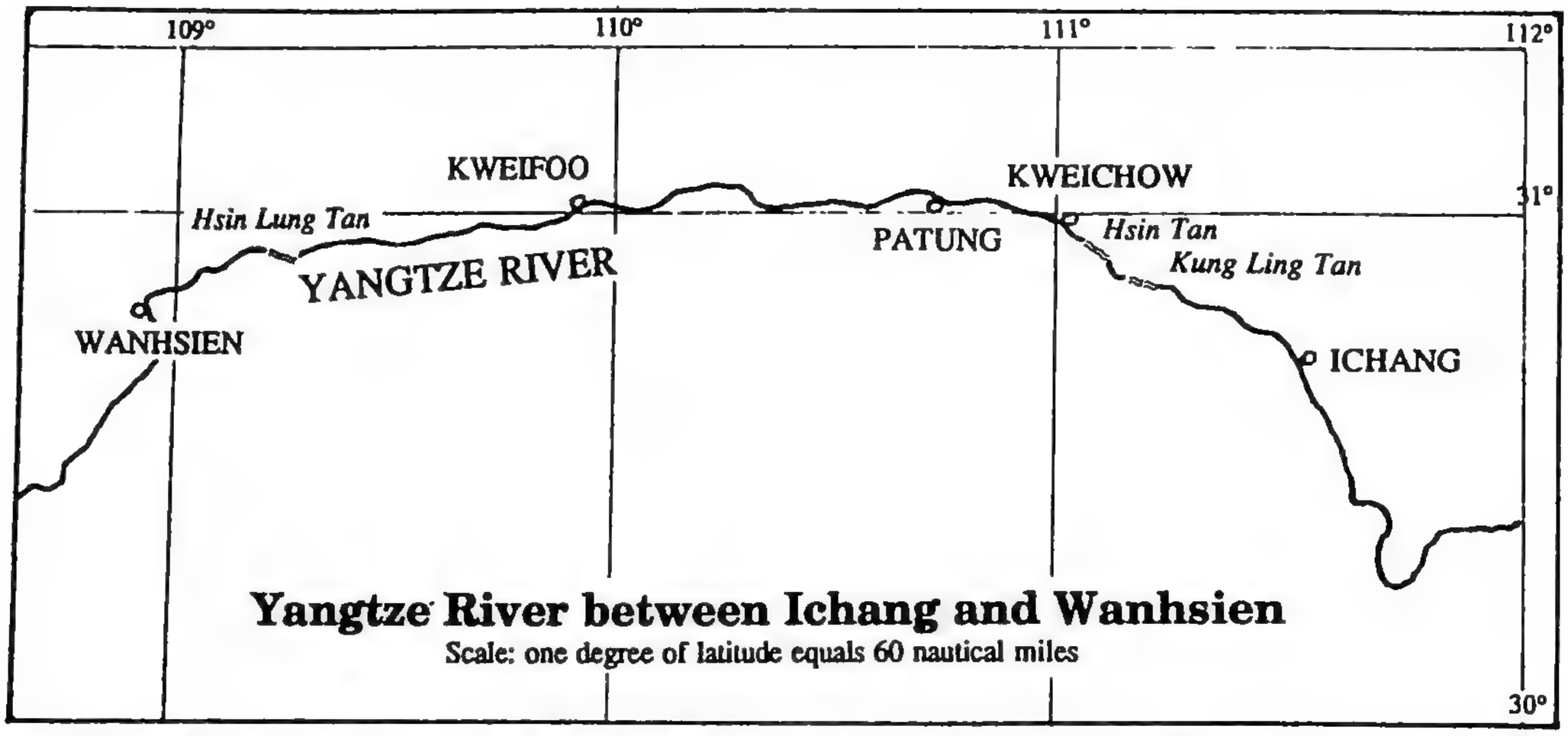
10. Wang was a subordinate of Yang Sen.

11. This rapid at mile thirty-three was considered to be the single most dangerous low-water rapid on the upper Yangtze. A series of rocks in mid-stream divide the river into several channels, the choice of which is a difficult decision for the pilot.

12. Captain H. M. Blaize commanded the SS *Chi Nan*, one of two small 120-foot freighters used by Yangtze Rapid Steamship Company on the upper river.

13. A compradore is the Chinese business agent carried on board Yangtze River ships. As a go-between and as a translator, he is a man of considerable power.

14. Miaho is a village with a marginal anchorage just above the Kunglingtan.



The stretch of river between Ichang and Wanhsien was the heart of the gorges and rapids of the Yangtze.

Blaize left because of the danger of himself and crew being seized by brigands and held for ransom. A few men were left to watch the vessel and we returned to the *I'Ping*.

Here we found that nothing had been done while we were away. The ship was in darkness and we were told that the chief engineer, the pilot and quartermasters had left. Then we received word that unless one of the ships was ready to leave the next day, the two captains and all the ships crews would be killed, and the vessels destroyed. The situation looked very grave and we knew not what to do.

I called two officers into my cabin and assured them that we were willing to do our best. By working carefully with them, and at the same time trying to encourage the crews, we were soon ready for work again. About this time the chief engineer, the compradore and the pilot all returned. All had a little food and we talked the situation over. The soldiers told us that they had been given orders to have the ship proceed or kill the crews, and declared that there was nothing for them to do but carry out the orders or turn brigands. There seemed no alternative for us but to do our best to try and repair the *I'Ping*. By this time the men were thoroughly scared so that both crews set to work at once and by four o'clock the next morning we had the repairs well in hand, and the leaks ready for cementing. At one on Friday afternoon, February 3rd, we steamed the Kung Ling Rapid with the cement still wet, the two lighters and much cargo being left behind as we were too heavily loaded. We anchored at Miaho at one-thirty.

The soldiers started to come on board at once, and when all but about two hundred had embarked, I was given orders to proceed. The men on shore, however, did not want to be left behind and at once opened fire on us. A soldier on the bow of the boat, seeing that we were going to leave, aimed his rifle at the boatswain saying that the steamer was not to sail. An officer on the bridge seeing this, jumped from the bridge to the deck below and collared the soldier for countermanding his orders. He returned to the bridge just in time to see a man threatening me. It looked for a moment as if there was going to be a real fight between his guard and the soldiers. Bedlam reigned everywhere, and there was indiscriminate firing all over the vessel, some wanting to go and others insisting that we take the men on shore. Noticing the seriousness of the situation, I told them that we would not go. When the anchors were dropped, however, the men on shore misunderstood the noise and thought that we were getting under way again and so there was another rain of bullets. Finally we got all the remaining troops on board, went on our way, anchoring at five-thirty on the left bank of the river just below the Hsin Rapid.[15]

Here we were happy to see the *Min San* and the *Yu Kiang*, because they were smaller vessels and with these to carry troops we thought that we would not have to go over the rapid, but could return to Ichang. However it was not long before my hopes were blasted. Seeing that we had to go over, I asked the skipper of the *Yu Kiang* if he could let me have some good coal as I knew that we

15. *Tan* is the suffix for a rapid. The Hsintan was another notorious low-water rapid, located at mile 38.5 above Ichang. The current sometimes reached 14 knots here, and the difference in water level could be as much as six feet in a ship's length.

Yang Sen was the war lord responsible for the commandeerings in the spring of 1928 on the upper Yangtze.

could not make the rapid on what we had. He was able to give me six tons.

The Captain of the *Yu Kiang* was in a very nervous condition. He amused us by saying that he had been forced to anchor in so many seemingly impossible places that he thought now "he could anchor his vessel on the pavement of Shanghai." He had not had any proper food for so long that I invited him over. All that he had left of his stores was a little macaroni. He was too nervous to eat however.[16]

The next morning, Saturday February 4th, we prepared to steam the Hsin Tan. It was like a boiling pot and I did not think that we could make it. Some of the troops went ashore, and we got two wires and a bamboo rope ashore.[17] At 9:25 we got under way and ten minutes later entered the rapid. Unfortunately one wire gave way, and at the same time the chief engineer informed me that he only had enough coal for half an hour's steaming. We made a miraculous descent of the rapid, going down broadside and just missing the rocks. We again anchored below the Hsin Tan, thinking that the officers of the troops would now see that it was impossible for us to get up. Soon the *Yung An* appeared above the rapids and we felt sure that the troops would walk up and board her and we would be able to return down river.

We were to have no such luck, however, for soon the following sealed order was received:

SS *Yung An*
Office of the 8th Division
February 4, 1928
Noon

The Captain
SS *I'Ping*

Sir:

The different units of the Eighth Division have been given orders to evacuate Ichang and return to Szechuen. You will see to it, therefore, that strict orders are given your chief pilot and chief engineer that your ship is to proceed over the Hsin Tan.

NOTICE. Yesterday at the Miaho anchorage the above-mentioned captain said that he would be willing to steam the rapid, but today he refuses. The *Wu Hsing*, a ship of the same size, has gone over the rapid successfully. This proves that the captain of the *I'Ping* is simply making excuses and does not want to go over. This is most hateful and spiteful. Be assured, therefore, that if you do not proceed with all haste, your pilot and chief engineer will be forced to take the vessel over at the points of revolvers.

Signed with the seal of the
Division Commander

After consulting with the compradore, we decided that there was nothing to do but to try again. The *Yu Kiang* had just made it, and we hoped that we would be successful too. Three junk loads of coal were commandeered and we took on 12 tons. I sent for the chief engineer and told him to make the best of preparations, and that we would use the whole day if necessary to get ready.

All remaining cargo between decks and all in the upper bunkers, hides and "joss paper" were thrown over board. We tried to save the grass-cloth and silk, but in spite of all our endeavors, 17 packages of grass-cloth and two of yellow silk were either thrown overboard or stolen. The soldiers all disembarked, though at first they were most unwilling to go. We thought that by lightening the ship we might be able to get over the rapid. What we

16. Although this captain remained unidentified, at this time virtually all captains of Chinese steamers were Europeans or Americans. Shippers and insurance companies preferred this arrangement.

17. Wires were put ashore to be firmly secured around rocks or other firm objects, after which the ship would winch herself up through an otherwise impassable rapid. In lieu of this procedure, or sometimes supplementing it, a large group of coolies on shore, known as trackers, could haul a ship through the rapids by means of a woven bamboo hawser.

needed most of all was good coal, so I decided at all hazards, that we must get at the 20 tons, hidden under the cargo. I bribed the few soldiers remaining on board to say nothing by giving them money, and we took out sufficient coal to steam the Hsin Tan.

Again we put out two wire ropes and two also of heavy bamboo. The troops had promised to help, and I am sure that there were fully a thousand men pulling on the two bamboo ropes. We got under way at 5:25 P.M. with the water mark at one and eight tenths.[18] The ship lifted eight feet in her length of 150 feet over this rapid, or, rather, water fall. We succeeded this time, and at 6:25 anchored in the gorge above the Hsin Tan in 18 fathoms of water. Here we found that the *Wu Hsing* had left eight tons of coal for us.

The two officers complimented us very highly on getting over. We embarked the troops and proceeded at 7:30, anchoring at Chi Ysing Chi at 8:30 P.M.[19] We had now been at this business for seven days without rest and with very little food, and everybody was worn out. The officers, in gratitude for our successful passage of the rapid, tried to show their appreciation by keeping the soldiers out of the galleys, but this meant nothing as we had no food to prepare. The crew had been most loyal and had worked well, so I gave them all drinks and they had a jolly time. It did them all good.

On Sunday, February 5th, we proceeded at 8:00 A.M. Arriving at Kweichow[20] we found five other ships anchored there in almost impossible positions. The greatest of confusion prevailed. My officers wanted to go on, but those on shore wanted us to take more troops. We took on a few more and then got under way as we feared overloading. This angered those left behind as they were the last of the army and were afraid of brigands. However we proceeded and arrived at Kweifoo at 6:00 P.M.[21] The troops all disembarked, and General Wang was given a big reception.

Shortly after we dropped anchor, the *Yung An* arrived. She was the most awful sight that I have ever seen on a ship. Her starboard guard was under water and she listed badly. She must have had at least four thousand men on board. She carried no cargo and so every part of the ship was filled with soldiers.

During the evening Captain Anderson of the *Yung An* came over and told us of his troubles.[22] His ship had been even more crowded than mine, and he had been almost without food for several days. He asked me to take some of his troops, as he was so crowded he knew that he could not get over the Hsin Long Rapid the next day unless something was done to lighten the vessel. I told him that I would be willing, but that I had not received any orders for the next day. I gave him some food supplies, and retired. Just after getting in bed an invitation was received from General Wang asking us to a feast the next day. This looked as if we might be delayed indefinitely in Kweifoo. During the night many different bodies of troops wanted to come on board and there was constant trouble among them. One advance guard was shut up in the hold below, and there was continual firing among these men all through the night.

On Monday, February 6th, we got under way at 9:45 A.M. We were so crowded that I feared we could not steam the rapids. We managed to steam the smaller rapids, however, and seeing this the troops insisted that we could steam the Hsin Lung rapid[23] which was very bad at the time. We saw the *Yung An* above the rapid and knew that she had heaved, so decided that we too would do the same. I therefore asked that the troops be sent ashore while we heaved the rapid. There was trouble getting small boats and soon there was firing from all over the vessel. These men were hungry and tired, having been without food for days, and they were absolutely out-of-hand. Only about two hundred of them went ashore, although all of them had been told to do so. We got out our wires, and, though we had been at the rapid since 2:50 P.M., it was not until 4:20 that we succeeded in getting over. The soldiers came aboard and that night at 6:45 we arrived in Wanhsien, General Yang Sen's headquarters. The troops disembarked at once.[24]

You should have seen the vessel after the men were gone! It was covered with filth so deep from one end to another that we had literally to shovel it off. Cabins and

18. At key locations on the river, gauging stations measured the river level against data which had been established many years earlier. Zero or one-foot levels on the low-water rapids marked the absolute limits of navigation, even with haulage by winch or trackers.

19. Chi Ysing Chi is a village at the upper end of the rapid at mile thirty-nine.

20. Kweichow is a walled town on the left bank at mile thirty-six.

21. Kweifoo is another walled town on the left bank, 110 miles from Ichang, at the head of the gorges.

22. There were two captains by this name on the Yangtze, each of whom worked at one time or another for Yangtze Rapid Steamship Company: the brothers Edward and John Anderson. In May 1928, one commanded the *Chi Nan*, according to the diary of Corporal E. G. Grosskopf, USMC, a member of the armed guard crew of the *I'Ping*. This diary is preserved in the records of the Naval Historical Center, Washington, D. C. The 1928 annual report of the Yangtze Rapid Company confirms that John Anderson was employed by the company for the entire year and that Edward Anderson did not work for the company, so it is likely that the Anderson on the *Yung An* was Edward.

23. This rapid is 151 miles above Ichang, or about 22 miles below Wanhsien. It is characterized by an immense sluice, below which are violent whirlpools.

24. Wanhsien, the midway point between Chungking and Ichang, is the largest port between those two cities.

saloon looked as if a cyclone had struck. Beds were destroyed, mattresses spoiled, tables and chairs broken,and all fixtures gone. The whole ship would have to be refitted.

Everybody was tired and disgusted, so I went on shore and got twelve bottles of beer for the crew. [We were] surprise[d] to learn soon that the Wanhsien office of the Company had booked us with cargo, although the vessel was in need of extensive repairs and already had considerable cargo on board. The agent was very much displeased that I refused to load.

On Tuesday, February 7th, we got a written order of release. We prepared to get away early the next morning in order to make Ichang in one day. We loaded 50 tons of bunker coal for the down trip. The crew had behaved splendidly throughout the trip, working day and night and carrying out my instructions to the full, in spite of having no food for days and all their quarters occupied by soldiers. All their possessions which had not been hidden or smuggled ashore at Ichang were stolen. Knowing what they had endured, I gave them another dozen bottles of beer.

On Tuesday, February 8th, we proceeded at 6:20 A.M. Passing Kweifu at 10:55 we noticed that the *Chi Chuen*, an American ship owned by the same Company, was held by the military there. Passing Patung[25] a little after two o'clock that afternoon we were heavily fired upon. We had an armed guard on board of General Yang's men. These [soldiers] were firing from the ship and I feared that it might cause complications in Ichang, so I sent a quartermaster to ask them not to shoot. No sooner had he opened the door to the bridge than he was hit in the calf of the leg by a bullet. He got back to the bridge where I administered first aid. At three-thirty I turned around and reported to the USS *Guam*.[26] At 4:45 we touched rock at the Kung Ling Rapid but fortunately it did not cause a leak. We arrived in Ichang at 7:00 P.M.

Chungking, March 1, 1928

25. Patung, a village known for frequent gunfire from the shore, is sixty miles above Ichang.

26. The *Guam* was one of a pair of small gunboats, built as part of a larger group of six which were built in Shanghai in 1927-28 for the U.S. Navy. In 1941, as the *Wake*, she was left behind in China when American forces pulled out and was subsequently captured by the Japanese.

In April 1928, Captain Frandsen resigned his position as captain of the I'Ping *and became a river inspector for the Chinese Maritime Customs, the agency that regulated river commerce in China. Within a few weeks the* I'Ping *was commandeered again under her new captain. Even though by this time the ship had a small armed guard detachment of U.S. Marines on board, she was forced to spend three days at Wanhsien under the control of General Yang Sen, along with two other ships of the Yangtze Rapid Steamship Company, also with armed guards. No trooplift was required of the ships, however, and they were liberated upon the arrival of the gunboat Guam.*

After 1930 the attacks on ships of the Yangtze Rapid Steamship Company were largely the work of Communist forces, including the kidnapping, lengthy detainment, and ransoming of a captain in 1932. At the end of the latter year the attacks ceased, and the Yangtze became relatively quiet for the first time in many years. In 1935 the company declared bankruptcy, and the era of American-flag dry-cargo shipping on the Yangtze River came to an end.

David H. Grover is a retired university teacher and administrator whose last campus post was as Academic Dean of the California Maritime Academy. He has also served as a Naval Reserve and merchant marine officer. In addition to two books on western American history, he is the author of U.S. Army Ships and Watercraft of World War II, *published by the Naval Institute Press, and co-author, with his daughter Commander Gretchen G. Grover (USNR), of* Captives of Shanghai, The Story of the *President Harrison, published by Western Maritime Press. His latest book is* American Merchant Ships on the Yangtze, 1920-1941 *(Praeger, 1992).*

News

Harvard to Host Longitude Symposium

A major international event for those interested in scientific instruments, clock making, maritime history, geography, cartography, and the history of technology will take place from 4-6 November 1993. Organized by the Harvard University Collection of Historical Scientific Instruments in conjunction with the National Association of Watch and Clock Collectors, the Longitude Symposium will commemorate the three hundredth anniversary of the birth of John Harrison, inventor of the marine chronometer. The symposium will feature presentations by thirteen noted authorities from five countries on the context, history, and impact of Harrison's invention, its predecessor methodologies, and its successor instruments. Association events include an exhibition of clocks, watches, and other instruments, a reception at Harvard's Fogg Art Museum, and a banquet with guest speaker Alistair Cooke. For information about registration, special airfares, and lodging, contact: The Longitude Symposium, Harvard University, Science Center B6, Cambridge, MA 02138.

John Carter Brown Library Research Fellowships

The John Carter Brown Library, Providence, Rhode Island, will once again award approximately fifteen short- and long-term fellowships for work at the library from 1 June 1994 to 31 May 1995. Research proposed by applicants must be suited to the library's holdings, which are concentrated on the history of the Western Hemisphere during the colonial period (ca. 1492 to 1825), emphasizing the European discovery, exploration, settlement, and conquest of the New World, including the impact of the New World on the old. Short-term fellowships are available for periods of two to four months and carry a stipend of $1,000 per month. Long-term fellowships, funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities, are for six months and carry a stipend of $2,500 per month.

Several short-term fellowships have thematic restrictions, including the history of cartography, comparative history of the colonial Americas, early maritime history, and the Jewish experience in the New World before 1860. Scholars wishing to work at the library for a period of two to seven weeks may apply for a travel reimbursement grant of up to $500. The application deadline for fellowships is 15 January 1994. For additional information, requirements, and applications, contact the Director, John Carter Brown Library, Box 1894, Providence, RI 02912.

Call for Papers

The International Association for the Study of Maritime Mission will hold its third international conference at York, England, on 24-27 April 1995. Proposals for full-length or shorter forum papers as well as requests for details should be sent to: Stephen Friend, Department of Religious Studies, University College of Ripon & York St. John, College Road, Ripon, HG4 2QX, England.

Naval History at East Carolina University

The program in maritime history and nautical archaeology at East Carolina University is now emphasizing a naval history track. To promote this new emphasis, the Admiral Ernest M. Eller Fellowship in naval history will be awarded annually to the outstanding graduate student specializing in naval history. Additionally, the program now offers expanded course offerings in naval history. Students interested in graduate studies in naval history should address inquiries to Professor William N. Still, Jr., Program in Maritime History and Underwater Archaeology, Department of History, Admiral Eller House, East Carolina University, Greenville, NC 27858-4353.

New Directions in Maritime History

The International Commission on Maritime History and the Australian Association for Maritime History are sponsoring a conference to be held in Fremantle from 6-10 December 1993, entitled *New Directions in Maritime History*. The main purpose of the conference is to take stock of the current state of maritime history as a discipline and to map out pathways to the future. Themes to be addressed include naval and merchant history, ports and port cities, fisheries, maritime art and literature, and the position of maritime history in the community at large through maritime museums, heritage and education programs and maritime archaeology. For more information, write: New Directions in Maritime History, Department of History, University of Western Australia, Nedlands, WA 6009, Australia.

Book Reviews

RICHARD W. UNGER, *The Art of Medieval Technology: Images of Noah the Shipbuilder* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1991). Cloth, xv + 168 pages, bibliography, index, illustrations. $45.00.

Imagery of the Old Testament patriarch Noah and his ark is among the most popular and enduring iconography in western civilization. Even today, the subject often turns up in cartoons, toys, films, and topical advertising of various sorts. In his latest book, University of British Columbia history professor Richard Unger looks at Noah's art from the third through the seventeenth centuries AD.

The author begins with brief discussions of the relationship between art and technology, the origins of the discipline of the history of technology, and the functions of medieval art. His second chapter summarizes the major medieval theologians on the subject of Noah, along with a few general thoughts on nautical iconography and the catalog of images that follow.

Chapter Three, "Noah in Early Christian Thought and Art," begins to address the central focus of the book. The first section recounts the story of Noah in Genesis 5:29 through 9:29, with a few later, scattered references. Early biblical thinkers associated Noah with Christ and his ark with the Church. The Flood prefigured baptism and was symbolic of both the Last Judgment and the Resurrection. Visual imagery of Noah begins in the mid-third century in catacombs and on sarcophagi; significantly, the earliest pictures are of a bearded Noah with the ark as a box or sarcophagus, in keeping with the theme of post-Flood resurrection. This is not surprising, for the original biblical texts in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin use words meaning box or chest for the ark. Only in the fourth century does the ark actually become a boat for the first time, shortly before disappearing for a time from contemporary iconography.

By the fifth century the ark re-emerges as a boat almost exclusively, but the actual reason for the metamorphosis from box to boat is unknown. Unger does not speculate on this transfiguration nor offer any explanation for it. During the same century, the single most influential artistic tradition also emerged which would influence nearly all later depictions of Noah throughout the medieval period: the Cotton Genesis. This was an Egyptian Old Testament in Greek from the later fifth century, which originally had around five hundred images illustrating the story of Genesis. Probably derived from a second-century manuscript, it turned up with the British monarch Henry VIII in the sixteenth century. Subsequently joining the collection of Sir Robert Cotton (hence the name), it was partially destroyed in a 1731 fire. What little remains of one panel illustrates Noah with Roman clothing building a wicker box.

By the eleventh century, two separate traditions had emerged. Simply stated, in southern Europe, Noah is depicted directing the construction of the ark; in northern Europe, the patriarch builds alone. Nowhere defined, northern Europe seems to refer mainly to Britain and occasionally France, with a few other continental locations; southern Europe seems to mean mostly Italy. In any event, both traditions portray an elderly bearded Noah (five hundred years of age at the time of construction), but his clothing and the ark itself are beginning to reflect the cultural surroundings and shipbuilding traditions of the artists themselves rather than biblical antecedents. Occasionally, shipbuilding tools that also reflect new or local technology are portrayed in the hands of artisans by this period as well.

The fourth chapter, devoted to a discussion of European shipbuilding technology, is highly condensed and appears to be only lightly edited. As a result, the odd observation occasionally slips out, such as "All shipbuilders got their hands dirty working with the wood and fitting it in place" (p. 55). In addition, the text here and elsewhere sometimes manifests a certain discomfort with shipbuilding technology and terminology, which an expert editor might have been able to improve.

The next two chapters investigate the northern and southern European iconography in the High Middle Ages, developing more fully Unger's observation of the two divergent traditions. There is a tremendous increase in source material, due in part to a general increase in personal wealth in society as well as an increase in the number of poor readers needing illustrations to enhance

their understanding of the biblical texts. Psalter illustration, along with ecclesiastical sculpture, frescoes, mosaics, and stained glass windows also emerge during this period, enriching Noah's corpus immensely. However, as Unger outlines in his seventh chapter on the Renaissance and Reformation, art depicting Noah begins to decline in quantity as a consequence of an increasing theological and personal focus on the New Testament and on Mary and Jesus in particular. Unger also notes an increased interest among contemporary theologians in the more practical (or literal) aspects of the patriarch's story, with such famed individuals as Martin Luther and John Calvin grappling with how the ark was built and sailed, how so many animals managed to fit in, and the like. Liturgical plays, which had begun much earlier, also flourished during this period; some are known to have included scenes with Noah and the ark. As with all art for the period, imagery became more complex and execution more naturalistic; the ark's technology became correspondingly more indicative of the times rather than traditional biblical antecedents.

Noah enjoyed periods of relative popularity up to the early eighteenth century, waxing early with the spread of the printed word, then waning again toward the end as artists were increasingly unable to reconcile biblical text with their knowledge of shipbuilding. Throughout his popularity during these later centuries, he remains the elderly bearded patriarch, his clothing, setting, tools, ark, and companions changing with the times and fashions.

Unger's latest book illustrates well the changing views of Noah over the millennia. His overall approach attempts to bridge the fields of theology, art history, history of technology, maritime history, and anthropology; as a general observation, the later the period, the heavier the art historical emphasis. As might be expected, most of the changes are little more than reflections of the artists' times, as they drew from their own experience in illuminating their subject. This is no different today. What is different is the enduring popularity of this particular subject; judging from the ark's popularity today, this is likely to last well into the next millennium and beyond.

Along with its high price, the esoteric subject of this book is likely to keep it out of most libraries. Other quibbles are more minor: the aforementioned technological discomfort, the late mention of the presence of illustrations within the textual discussions of various images, and an increasing reliance on art historical rather than technological analysis for the later periods under investigation. Nevertheless, this slender volume offers much to think about, and interested readers may mine the extensive bibliography and copious illustrations for more material.

PAUL FORSYTHE JOHNSTON

Smithsonian Institution

B. C. HALL AND C. T. WOOD, *Big Muddy: Down the Mississippi Through America's Heartland* (New York: Dutton Books, 1992). 9¼" x 6¼", boards, xiii + 290 pages, locator map, 32 illustrations, references, index. $23.00.

Two themes flow through this exceptionally well-written, interesting book. The first, of course, is Old Man River, or more precisely, the landscapes and styles of life he dictates on either side of himself. The second begins as inconspicuously as does the great stream's tentative beginning, a rivulet draining out of Lake Itasca in northern Minnesota. As we read on, getting ever closer to the Gulf, the more enormous that theme becomes: we, mankind, are destroying the Mississippi River and, ultimately, life alongside it. Most of the damage has been done in just the past thirty years.

Hall and Wood accomplished their nearly 2,500-mile journey zigzagging from Lake Itasca to the Head of Passes at the Gulf of Mexico not by boat but by automobile, yet the river is always the thread, the string, the rope, the hawser upon which they hang what they have seen. In a style reminiscent of Charles Kuralt's "Sunday Morning" television program, the authors describe the river and its people in a loving yet melancholy way. There is much to be melancholy about.

Nonetheless, they put forward many a good river yarn and encapsulated vignettes of history all the way along: from the earliest French and Spanish explorers to the first emergence of a tough, brawling American civilization alongside these "Western Rivers," the old steamboats, railroads, present-day towboat traffic, a recent reappearance of riverboat gambling, antebellum cotton and sugar plantations, Bix Beiderbecke, W. C. Handy, St. Louis and Memphis blues, New Orleans jazz, as well as a host of other things, places, and people born of the Father of Waters during the last three hundred years.

Between Minneapolis-St. Paul, the effective head of commercial navigation on the upper Mississippi, and the Crescent City of New Orleans, some 1,700 miles downstream, dozens of other rivers flow into "Big Muddy" from west and east, including the Minnesota, St. Croix, Wisconsin, Iowa, Des Moines, Illinois, Missouri, Ohio, Arkansas, and Red. Together they drain about 40 percent of the land mass of the continental United States. Near the end is the delta region of Louisiana, where in its bayous and swamps an ecological catastrophe is almost complete; at the very end, in the Gulf of Mexico, matters are not much better. One has to think hard about the fish and crawfish, shrimp and oysters one eats down there nowadays! Who knows what poisons they contain.

All these rivers carry with them the toxic sludge of "progress." All their waters end up in the Mississippi, so

the closer one gets to the Gulf the more of a storm sewer it becomes, a deadly flowing concentrate of human, agricultural, and petrochemical waste from four-tenths of the United States. It is not difficult to understand Hall and Wood's dolor.

This reviewer is familiar with a great many of the cities and towns they describe — even little places like Fort Adams, New Madrid, Hannibal, and Prairie du Chien — but from a different perspective. I can state unequivocally that the authors know whereof they speak. Their perspective is of the river from the land; mine is mostly the other way around — the land from the river. Having traveled nearly 7,000 miles on the Mississippi by overnight passenger steamboat, from one end to the other, several times, I have seen sights that are often appalling. The so-called "Cancer Corridor" from New Orleans up to Baton Rouge, where massive petrochemical complexes line the banks on and off for miles, may be the worst.

Big Muddy is an excellent book, well worth taking the time to read. If anything, it doesn't go far enough, but then, no traveler can take in all the sights let alone write them all down. The accompanying illustrations don't do the rest of the book justice; they have been poorly printed and, seemingly, almost randomly selected. There is something here for everyone who loves the rivers and for those who know nothing about them. For the latter, this book would be a good one to cut some teeth on.

PHILIP C. F. SMITH

Bath, Maine

HENRY C. CLAUSEN AND BRUCE LEE, *Pearl Harbor: Final Judgment* (New York: Crown Publishing, 1992). 485 pages, photos, index, appendices, no bibliography. $25.00.

The Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor attracts our attention for many reasons, if for no other reason than it created World War II. American belligerency alone joined the war in Europe between Britain and Russia, on the one hand, and Germany and Italy on the other, with the four-year-long Sino-Japanese conflict. Pearl Harbor profoundly shocked Americans, and disclosures at the 1945-46 congressional investigation about codebreaking, spies, coverups, and conspiracies thoroughly sensationalized the event. Japan's conduct of the Pacific War was so consistently inept and poorly managed, and the U.S. Navy's campaigns so skillfully conducted by contrast, that many found it hard to accept that the 1941 Oahu fiasco resulted from unusually good Japanese planning and execution and bungling by the inept American fleet commander and his luckless army counterpart.

Like all important, complex events, the Pearl Harbor story is laced by seemingly contradictory evidence, apparently inexplicable contradictions, and a dose of true tragedy and bathos. The complexity of the event makes it doubly strange that Pearl Harbor has lent itself to such self-assured judgments. The foremost student of the tragedy, Gorgon Prange, entitled one of his many tomes *The Verdict of History;* a participant, Rear Admiral Theobald, wrote *The Final Secret of Pearl Harbor. Final Judgment* by Henry Clausen and Bruce Lee follows this practice. The genre also invites hyperbole. *Final Judgment*'s dust jacket, for example, claims that the work "puts an end to all the conspiracy theories . . . and self-serving misinformation that . . . pollute the historical record."

No one has added more pages to the Pearl Harbor literature than Bruce Lee, a New York editor, who brought Gorgon Prange's many incomplete manuscripts to McGraw-Hill and who, a few years later, arranged for Morrow to publish *And I Was There*, a British pop historian's embellishment of Rear Admiral Edwin Layton's short memoir. Lee claims to be "regarded as a major figure in military history." Lee's co-author, Henry Clausen, adds a few details to the known story — enough to justify an article, not a twenty-five-dollar book. Irked that the army's official Pearl Harbor Board found fault with his friend, General George C. Marshall, Secretary of War Henry Stimson commissioned lawyer Clausen to interview more witnesses and collect additional documents in an unabashed attempt to exonerate the revered wartime chief of staff. Not surprisingly, Clausen found exculpatory evidence to clear Marshall, and by implication, Stimson, which was, after all, his mission. Clausen's special writ was to ask why such an apparently effective prewar American intelligence attack on the Japanese failed to predict the 7 December strategic surprise. He travelled to Europe and the Pacific, interviewed ninety-two uniformed and civilian witnesses — mostly low-ranking, peripheral figures — between December 1944 and September 1945, and wrote a report which was published in 1946 in the congressional *Pearl Harbor Attack Hearings*. Details of Clausen's colloquies are the most interesting aspect of this memoir-cum-appraisal, owing in part to his colorful reactions to his witnesses.

No one familiar with the Pearl Harbor literature will be unsettled by Clausen's unevenly written account or his assertive conclusions. The Pacific Fleet Intelligence Officer, Lieutenant Commander Edwin Layton, "suckered the Army" (p. 303), according to Clausen, so as to divert investigators' attention away from the conduct of Admiral Kimmel and the CinCPac staff. Not only did Layton not deliver the navy's 27 November "war warning" message to General Short, as Kimmel had ordered, but also "Layton should have known the implications of the December 3 warnings: war was inevitable." As for Kimmel, he "withheld vital intelligence from Short" (p. 301).

While pointing out that Admiral Kimmel and Lieutenant General Walter Short, the commander of the army's Hawaiian Department, might have been better served by stronger staffs, Clausen indicts Short for making minor pre-attack changes in his war plans without notifying Washington, for failing to react to local intelligence about Japanese activity, and for not responding correctly to the series of secondary alerts between the well-known "war warning" messages of 27 November and 7 December. In effect, Stimson commissioned Clausen to fashion a defense of the conduct of the chief of staff and the secretary of war from evidence unavailable to earlier investigators, and Clausen did so in a lawyerly manner.

Other reviewers have found important Clausen's assertion that the crucial last part of the final fourteen-part Japanese message ending negotiations was deciphered in Washington on the night of 6 December but not distributed until the next morning. This claim, supported only by Clausen's recollections of interviews with an army colonel whose own memory was demonstrably poor, directly conflicts with unambiguous documentary evidence proving that the paragraphs at issue were not available in Washington until 0530 on Sunday.

Like any competent counsel, Clausen ignores evidence contradicting his version of events. For example, he imputes a unique and unwarranted importance to the largely semantic changes Short made in the Hawaiian Department's war plans. Short had the "primary duty and task of defending the fleet and Hawaii from attack" (p. 300), Clausen insists. Clausen ignores evidence suggesting a tacit understanding as early as March 1941 that, in practice, the army could do little to defend the Pacific Fleet in Pearl Harbor, the wording of several formal arrangements notwithstanding. For another, the War Department's initial warning to Short was ambiguously worded, and Short took it to mean that he was to guard against local sabotage. He disposed his forces accordingly, fully informed General Marshall, and received no corrective instructions before the attack. Because his aircraft, parked wingtip-to-wingtip, were destroyed on the ground, Short rightly got the sack. Marshall's many explanations of his conduct never disputed these basic facts, and nothing in Clausen's account does either.

Nonetheless, *Final Judgment* contains quite a surprise, although neither Clausen nor co-author Lee was sufficiently familiar with the historiography to understand what they possessed. When the navy delivered a Purple machine, capable of deciphering Japanese diplomatic traffic, to London in February 1941, the British agreed to attack the Tokyo-Berlin, Tokyo-Rome, and Tokyo-Hanoi circuits, leaving the vital Tokyo-Washington circuit to the Americans. Notwithstanding the revelation of the Ultra secret and considerable American disclosures, the Cabinet Office has consistently refused to declassify the results of British radio intelligence attacks against the diplomatic or military communications of powers with whom Britain was not at war. During his investigation, however, Clausen obtained forty-one intercepts at Bletchley Park dating from 21 November to 22 December 1941, including one message (reproduced on p. 364) from the Tokyo-Washington circuit decrypted on 4 December. Over two hundred more Bletchley Park intercepts of Japanese "Purple" traffic are available in American archives, but neither Clausen nor Lee understood their importance. The extent, character, and quality of the prewar exchange of Axis diplomatic, military, and naval intercepts and analysis between Washington and London remains largely unclear, but Clausen's one-sided, violently opinionated, decidedly minor contribution to the massive literature about Pearl Harbor at least has the virtue of providing a single, tantalizing new fact.

ROBERT W. LOVE, JR.
United States Naval Academy

DONALD A. YERXA, *Admirals and Empire: The United States Navy and the Caribbean, 1898-1945* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 1991). 212 pages, photos, appendices. $34.95.

Donald A. Yerxa's *Admirals and Empire* is a welcome addition to the growing body of literature on the U.S. Navy. Most studies of the navy tend focus on broad strategic questions and activities in the Pacific and North Atlantic. Often such works highlight World War II and post-World War II naval actions. Yerxa's work, with its concentration on pre-World War II naval operations in the Caribbean, fills a major gap in American naval history.

The author makes his thesis very clear in the early chapters of the book — the navy in the Caribbean performed its duties in a manner consistent with the activities of naval forces of other great naval maritime empires throughout history. Using Clark G. Reynolds's "maritime empire" model rather than relying on the traditional Mahanian thesis, Yerxa does an excellent job of placing U.S. naval strategy in the context of late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century British and German strategy. In his introduction, he points out that "maritime empires utilize their navies not simply to defend themselves from other powers, but also to police important sea-lanes and to assist in pacification operations." The U.S. government, he explains, willingly used the navy to keep peace in the Caribbean, even when outside threats seemed minimal.

The United States gained predominance in the Caribbean in the period between 1895 and 1915, gradually replacing Great Britain as the dominant economic and military power in the region. The Spanish-American War,

in particular, made the U.S. a Caribbean power, and protection of this new empire from British and German encroachments required aggressive naval and military expansion. Furthermore, as the author aptly points out, the paramount strategic and economic importance attached to the Panama Canal upon its completion in 1914 made the Caribbean Sea the most crucial region for American naval strategy during the decades preceding World War I. Consequently, the navy assumed the role of regional policeman as well as the Caribbean's defender from intercontinental threats. Both of these missions pointed to the same policy end — imperial control of the area. That goal involved the navy in two general tasks: shows of force designed to halt political instability, to deter European interference, or to facilitate diplomatic negotiations; and outright interventions accompanied by long-term military occupation.

Although the Caribbean was a minor theater of war during World War I, its strategic importance to overall American national security necessitated a continued naval presence there. After World War I, strategic planners no longer envisioned an attack from Europe as a threat to security. The 1922 agreement on the limitation of naval armaments had the effect of assuring American domination in the Caribbean Sea. In addition, the emergence of Japan as the most likely naval opponent of the U.S. elevated the strategic importance of the Pacific Ocean over the Atlantic during the interwar period.

Despite the lack of a plausible opponent in the Atlantic, the navy saw the Caribbean Sea as an important crossroads of maritime communications. Furthermore, as Yerxa explains, the Panama Canal became the focal point of all war plan studies and exercises since it provided the only means for U.S. sea power to concentrate quickly in either ocean. That focus proved crucial to planning for hemisphere defense prior to U.S. entry into World War II.

In 1940, with war imminent, President Roosevelt made the Atlantic-first decision. That determination again attached primary strategic importance to the Caribbean. As the possibility of a war with Germany increased, the navy took steps toward making the region safe. Naval planners began developing a set of war plans and a fleet structure which recognized the growing importance of the Caribbean and Atlantic waters to American national security. Also at this point, the navy's leadership finally came to terms with a coherent scheme of base development in the region, something upon which they previously could not agree.

It quickly became evident during the war that the Caribbean Sea would be relatively free from encroachment. Although the Panama Canal escaped attack, it proved to be a vital asset to the Allied war cause, confirming the shrewdness of naval planning for the protection of the region. The canal became a crucial pipeline for logistics material going to the Pacific theater. By 1945, as the author dramatically concludes, "the American empire in the Caribbean seemed unassailable," thanks in large part to the plans and actions of the U.S. Navy.

Overall, Yerxa's narrative is informative and well researched. The work represents a substantial revision and expansion of his dissertation, "The United States Navy and the Caribbean Sea, 1914-1941." The new material Yerxa includes, especially that regarding activities in the Caribbean during World War II, adds much to the understanding of this period in naval history. Relying heavily on documents at the Department of the Navy's Operational Archives, the author details not only naval operations in the Caribbean but also the maturation of the navy's strategic thinking — from hemispheric defense to global readiness. The work will be a welcome addition to the library of anyone interested in the naval and diplomatic relations of the United States with the nations of the Caribbean.

THERESA L. KRAUS

Federal Aviation Administration

FRANKLIN W. KNIGHT AND PEGGY K. LISS, EDS., *Atlantic Port Cities: Economy, Culture, and Society in the Atlantic World, 1650-1850* (Knoxville, TN: The University of Tennessee Press, 1991). xvii + 302 pages, maps, notes, index. ISBN 0-87049-657-3.

In recent years, urban history has become one of the foci of attention in the study of colonial empires and regional or world economic systems. At the same time, ports and port cities have risen as ever more important elements of maritime history. Besides "biographical" studies of individual port towns and cities, several collaborative collections of essays with a comparative thrust have appeared. This volume bears witness to the rise of port cities as a theme in the regional context of Atlantic history, while others have dealt with Asia or with colonial cities in general.

Atlantic Port Cities begins, perhaps somewhat oddly, with two brief introductions, one by the veteran of oceanic and transcultural studies Philip D. Curtin and the other by the two editors. The two felicitously complement each other as Curtin addresses more theoretical concepts and, in particular, focuses on central place theory, the "web of solidarity" which helps give a sense of common identity to the many-layered populations of port cities and the problem of their multi-functionality. Knight and Liss do touch on the hoary problem of hinterland definition and the many-sided impact of "active commerce" (p. 4) but find their inspiration mainly in more historical problems

such as the mind casts of the various colonial Americans and how these related to the political revolutions of Latin America. They also, and rightly, stress the vital need for more studies of merchant firms and other entrepreneurs, and of wages and prices, in order to help reconstruct the economic context within which the social, political, and cultural life of the port cities must be understood. However, although the starting point of the editors and indeed many of the other authors of the volume is Jacob Price's 1974 article on North American port cities (Jacob M. Price, "Economic Function and the Growth of American Port Towns in the Eighteenth Century," *Perspectives in American History* 8 [1974]: 123-186), very few if any comparisons are made in this respect with Philadelphia and America's smaller port towns.

The agenda of the editors is indeed a highly ambitious one — all the more so as they define the period of their investigation to be 1650-1850, one that includes both the revolutionary and post-revolutionary periods. Unfortunately, only B. W. Higman, in his study of the Jamaican port system, ventures deeply into the nineteenth century. All other authors stay firmly, and safely, in the eighteenth century or at the most finish by touching on the revolutionary period. Thus, neither the full impact of the Industrial Revolution and the massive entry of the Germans nor the perennial but inevitable question of continuity vs. change before and after independence is considered. Especially Havana, the Brazilian ports, Buenos Aires, and Kingston — before and after the abolition of slavery — would have provided exciting examples of such diachronic research. Equally, the "Culture" promised in the book's title is hardly represented.

Nevertheless, there is very much of value in the individual studies, both from the viewpoint of local (and sometimes national) history and in the ideas and issues raised. Many of these are of general thematic value for port city and urban, maritime, economic, and colonial history in general. Regrettably, there is here no space to provide a detailed review of all, in quality no more than slightly uneven, contributions and Price's concluding chapter, but the following points may be highlighted.

Most chapters, following Price's 1974 article, contain detailed occupational analyses of the respective port towns and cities. Despite serious statistical problems, these and the more general demographic aspects are very strong features throughout the volume. The often multifunctional nature — oceanic shipping and trade, defense, and administration — of port cities is underlined, but equally so the fundamentally maritime nature of their *raison d'être*, influence, and wider role. Some ports are discussed in isolation, others within the context of port rivalry and struggles for regional hegemony. Higman on Jamaica, Anne Pérotin-Dumon on Guadeloupe, David Geggus on Saint Domingue, and A. J. R. Russell-Wood on colonial Brazil all provide stimulating examples of the latter approach. In almost all chapters, the occupational and social status of blacks is a subject of vital concern.

In his succinct study of Havana, Allan J. Kuethe stresses that not only the location (the "situation" of the geographers) and timber resources of the city but also the political and entrepreneurial acumen of its inhabitants determined its growth. Guadalupe Jiménez Codinach takes this point further in his study of the fascinating Spanish-British-Mexican banking house of Gordon & Murphy, which during the Napoleonic Wars operated a maze of operations through Vera Cruz. (Somewhat surprisingly, he did not use Marten G. Buist's history of Hope & Company *At Spes non Fracta. Hope & Co. 1770-1815* [The Hague, 1974]). Implicitly he raises a point which most authors avoid: what was done with the profits made from shipping, trade, and finance? Even if one does accept Vera Cruz as a sizable port city (and why not? it had 20,000 inhabitants in 1807; more than Boston [p. 151]), the prosperity of the economic elite did not "trickle down" to the population at large. Evidently, while more business studies are needed to throw light on the inner dynamics of port cities, they raise as many questions as answers.

Lance R. Grahn's chapter on Cartagena contrasts the social hierarchy of its population (including a sizable clerical proportion) with the leveling effects of vipers and disease; in this city wealth did not buy a better chance at survival. Russell-Wood takes up the theme of health in his highly stimulating discussion of the threefold impact of oceanic seafaring on Brazil's colonial port cities: crime, biomedical consequences, and provisioning. The masters and officers of Portuguese vessels, moreover, were often involved in the creation of chapels, churches, and brotherhoods. Altogether, this gave a highly specific maritime character to Salvador, the city of which he describes a more detailed "portrait." Russell-Wood also points at the "cruel irony" (p. 230) that ports, because of their location, were the first to receive new ideas and to be vulnerable to influences from overseas, while their home countries were bound to exert themselves even more to maintain their hold over the colonial ports and their hinterlands.

A special and almost common feature of the cities and towns discussed in this volume was contraband and fraud. Some ports would hardly have been more than backwaters had they not spectacularly increased their shipping movements and/or overland trade in this fashion. Others, like Havana, used it (presaging practices of the 1980s) to divert public funds for private investment in plantations. These and many other connections between the respective spheres of private enterprise and government also serve to remind the reader that most of the cities and events discussed in this volume originated during the period of

the mercantilist empires, which makes it all the more a pity that no author has endeavored to contrast developments and dynamics before and after revolution and independence.

Atlantic Port Cities has much to offer to urban, colonial, and (especially relevant for the readers of *The American Neptune)* maritime historians, including many suggestions for future research. It is a pity — but of course totally outside the control of publishers and authors — that the cataloguing czars of the Library of Congress have not seen fit to consider the categories "ports," "port cities," or "maritime" in classifying it. Consequently, many maritime historians may miss it, and the myth is perpetuated that maritime history deals only with ships at sea.

FRANK BROEZE
The University of Western Australia

MALCOLM H. MURFETT, *Hostage on the Yangtze: Britain, China, and the* Amethyst *Crisis of 1949* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 1991). 313 pages.

Malcolm Murfett's book on the *Amethyst* crisis is a detailed account of a minor incident at a major turning point of Chinese history: the Communist victory in 1949. It is, we can say, a mere footnote to the century-long Chinese struggle to free itself from the yoke of imperialist abuse. If the frigate *Amethyst* has any historical significance at all, it is surely its symbolic implication.

The *Amethyst* incident can be summarized as this: In April 1949, amid the Civil War between the Chinese Communist Party and the Nationalists (the Guomindang), and at a time of heightened anti-imperialist sentiment (especially around Shanghai), the British sent the *Amethyst* up the Yangzi River to Nanjing (without prior consultation with the Communists who were then attacking the city), allegedly to protect the expatriate community there. Midway through the voyage, the armed frigate came under heavy fire from Communist batteries and ran aground. After an abortive rescue attempt by the Royal Navy, a long and tedious negotiation between the British and the Chinese took place. Negotiations dragged on as each side insisted on its innocence, until the surprising escape of the *Amethyst* in late July 1949. Thus ended the "crisis" along with the end of Sino-British relations (until recently).

The major contention between the two governments throughout the difficult negotiation was therefore the issue of culpability: who was to blame for the "tragedy" of the *Amethyst?* To the British, as Admiral Patrick Brind put it, the whole incident was caused by sheer "misunderstanding" (p. 185) and it represented a "cold war in which the cause of freedom is being attacked" (p. 193). As for the Communists, who were now emerging as the new leaders of a country that had been harassed and abused by foreign powers ever since the 1840s, it was but another "routinized" expression of imperialistic infringement: a Western warship violated Chinese sovereignty by traveling at will in her waters. It would not be tolerated.

Murfett alludes to this conflict of perception and attitude several times in his study (mainly in chapter 16, the "Aftermath"). For example, he correctly observes that by posting a naval presence in the Yangzi the British "continued to flaunt their indifference to Chinese sensitivities" (p. 228) and as such "smacked of old-style imperialism" (p. 40). But Murfett never explains nor elaborates on this important issue. In fact, despite its rich (and at times over-burdensome) narrative details, the book is so lacking in analytical depth that we are often at a loss of how to make better sense of the story. When the author discusses the problem of Western imperialism in the first two chapters, apparently as a historical context for the incident, he fails to pinpoint both the nature and manifestation of British imperialism in modern China. For example, Murfett fails to go into the issue of illegal opium trafficking in his account of the Opium War (p. 6); to spell out and analyze the terms of "unequal treaties" (especially the "extraterritoriality" which granted all foreigners immunity to Chinese laws) that angered so many Chinese; to discuss all the special privileges Westerners took for granted in China, and even to specify British interests in the lower Yangzi delta. Although the first chapter is entitled "Gunboat Diplomacy," it does not convey at all the flavor or "essence" of this important concept — a concept that best characterizes Chinese foreign relations until 1949.

Judging from its masterplot, moreover, the whole book reads like a "Western movie" featuring the crew members of the *Amethyst* as heroes fighting against the maneuvering Chinese and eventually making "a successful dash for freedom" (p. 216). Amid praise for the British "stoic" resistance (p. 186), the problem of imperialism disappears. Perhaps for this reason, Murfett often uses judgmental adjectives like "reckless," "complacent," and "ill-conceived" to describe the British leaders' decision to send the frigate *Amethyst* up river, but he never tries to delve into the minds of leading actors such as Admirals Brind and Madden. A large part of Murfett's problem is his limited knowledge of Chinese history. He makes quite a few spelling mistakes of names and confusing romanizations of place names, and his book depends almost entirely on British archival materials. The few secondary materials he consults on China are rather old (notably Hosea Morse's *The International Relations of the Chinese Empires from the 1910s)*, while he overlooks more recent scholarly works such as Frederic Wakeman's *Strangers at the Gate*, Nicholas Clifford's *Shanghai, 1925: Urban*

Nationalism and the Defence of Foreign Privilege, or Jonathan Spence's *The Search for Modern China.*

Basing his research entirely on British government archives, Murfett has produced a detailed, well-informed, but ultimately one-sided narrative of the incident. Certainly it is a difficult task to explore motives on the Communist side, since they are ultra-protective regarding their papers and documents. Still, the attempt should be made, at a minimum through consultation of more published Chinese materials. Did the batteries open fire at the frigate as a deliberate lesson to all Western powers in China, warning them away from intervention in favor of the Nationalists, or was it the responsibility only of some local commander? Might the dramatic escape of the *Amethyst*, in turn, have been the result of a decision by the Communists to find a way to disentangle themselves from a diplomatic embroglio rather than mere inefficiency? Such questions can only be answered by the Chinese archives.

Murfett's book also lacks an intertextual dimension. He has not made clear how his findings differ from those of his predecessors, Lawrence Earl in *Escape of the* Amethyst (1958) and C. Philip's *Yangtse Incident* (1973), or indeed how his approach compares to other works on Sino-British relations in the 1940s and '50s. All in all, Murfett produces a detailed account which shows that this relatively minor incident actually had an important symbolic significance, but the last word will not be said upon it until the story can be told from the viewpoints of both London and Beijing.

POSHEK FU

Colgate University

BOB RUEGG AND ARNOLD HAGUE, *Convoys to Russia, 1941-1945* (Kendal, England: World Ship Society, rev. ed., 1993). 104 pages, illustrations, maps, 6 tables. £13.50 (including overseas postage).

This little soft-cover reference volume will appeal to anyone who has an interest in the horrific "Murmansk Convoys" of the Second World War or who needs an accurate reference source to the vessels involved, both naval and merchant marine. The authors begin by providing a few paragraphs explaining why it was necessary to ship supplies to Russia and an overview of the German threat from capital ships, aircraft, and U-boats. They follow with a detailed description of the harbor and facilities at Murmansk on Russia's northwest coast, general maps of the area of operations, and a quick review of the efforts of the Royal Navy to counter the surface threat with mines and submarines. Next comes the meat of the volume, a detailed description, in a few paragraphs, of every single convoy into and back from Murmansk, starting with Operation Dervish, which sailed from Liverpool on 12 August 1941 with seven merchantmen, and ending with Convoy RA 67, which sailed from Russia on 23 May 1945. All merchant ships are listed with their tonnages and crew, nationality, and convoy position number, a massive research chore that took four years. Included for each passage is a narrative description of all the escorts as well, close and more distant support provided by the Royal Navy, the Royal Canadian Navy, the U.S. Navy, and other Allied warships. There are also brief paragraphs summarizing many other passages of non-convoy ships to North Russia, such as Operation Strength, in which the carrier HMS *Argus* took Hurricane aircraft to Archangel, and the passage of further Air Force stores and medical personnel in the cruiser *Tuscaloosa* and the destroyers *Rodman* and *Emmons* as part of Operations EU.

Each convoy is summarized in a few lines as to losses, unusual problems, ships that turned back due to damage, breakdown, or navigation errors, and a commentary on the attacks by the various not-far-distant German forces. The authors account for every ship that set off for north Russia, even those that only got as far as Iceland or were stranded in Murmansk until the war's end.

The tables at the end will prove particularly useful: British and Allied Warship Losses; German Losses; Alphabetical and Chronological Lists of Merchant Ship Losses; Index of Warships By Convoy Escorted or Supported; and Alphabetical Index of Merchant Ships And Their Convoys. These lists, along with the brief text in the body of this work, will resolve every argument as to who was there, when, and what happened. It all arose from the recent awards by Russia of a service medal to all those who fought through these Murmansk convoys. Even the photos chosen are excellent examples, every one involving the warships and merchantmen of this nasty job. *Convoys to Russia* is well worth its shelf space.

FRASER M. MCKEE

Markdale, Ontario

WILLIAM H. MILLER, *S.S.* United States: *The Story of America's Greatest Ocean Liner* (New York and London: W. W. Norton, 1991). 9¾" x 6¾", cloth, 224 pages, 171 illustrations in black and white, color dust jacket, bibliography, index, foreword by Margaret Truman Daniel. $35.00.

By late 1993, SS *United States* could be under flag-of-convenience operation or scrapped. Either outcome looms wherever her Turkish-headquartered owners towed her in June 1992 from Newport News, Virginia. The smart money, though saddened money, may well be on scrapping, a seamy end to a far too long-running maritime saga.

S.S. United States: *The Story of America's Greatest Ocean Liner* is the latest full-length book about the vessel since Frank Braynard's 1981 *The Big Ship: The Story of the* United States. Yet this latest one does not quite equal Braynard's in scope or mass of detail, nor does it provide a satisfying continuation of the liner's story.

The book actually treats three topics, the SS *America, United States,* and the last captain of "Big U," Commodore Leroy J. Alexanderson. The biographical treatment of Alexanderson comes across on the worshipful side. Attention to Alexanderson is in order; his life and career figure importantly in U.S. maritime history. He offers any biographer an excellent subject. To this day he remains brisk, opinionated, formidable, a man to rely on but never one to push too far. Miller does not probe those overtones deeply in this intermittent iconograph. Perhaps letting a wart or two come through would have yielded a more bracing portrait.

The book is handsomely laid out with excellent photos integrated into the text. But generous graphics aside, this is a short book, and thirty-five dollars is a lot for a book that is nearly article length. Without Alexanderson's personal and photographic files and oral histories, we would have an even slighter offering here. Miller's bibliography cities but ten books, most of them reference sources.

A disappointment is Miller's examination of the liner's career while owned by Richard H. Hadley's United States Cruises Company (USC). His survey is cursory and mostly comprises blocks of promotional material rarely framed in a critical perspective. Readers of Braynard's 1981 book might reasonably expect a continuation of the story. There is a larger, more complex tale from 1981 to now than this book offers.

The Maritime Agency's (MARAD) marketing of the vessel from 1971 to 1982 smacks of Willy Loman in Howard Wagner's office, dereliction looming, the asking price gradually, desperately lowered. The offers ranged from the promising but under-capitalized to the odd; all merit some scrutiny in a full-length book. Miller, for instance, takes at face value a bid from the so-called Svanholm Laboratories. MARAD's files teem with that correspondence; it takes fascinating, surreal turns. In one 1974 letter MARAD barely contains its exasperation when exhorting Svanholm to give up on possibly acquiring the liner whose asking price then was $12 million. It also returns Svanholm's ten-dollar check.

In the late 1970s Ken Wallis, a California inventor and entrepreneur, campaigned with the encouragement of the National Maritime Union to obtain the vessel via government subsidy. Much smooth correspondence with officials and vendors resulted, but with no success. Somehow Wallis attracted Seattle developer Hadley to the scheme. By 1979 Hadley had raised sufficient backing to buy the liner for close to $4 million. Immediately there appeared a glossy prospectus from USC that showed an all-white *United States* spoiling for a 1981 re-entry into New York; it also solicited investments in a maritime application of the limited-use condo scheme. Meanwhile, USC hadn't even had the ship's bottom surveyed yet, and Wallis was opposing Hadley in court. Later USC crafted an interesting consultative troika for an even more elaborate super-cruiseship. A California architect and designer, a former United States Lines vice president, and an engineer from New York's J.J. Henry marine architects comprised the group. Their ultimate aim was to make the proposed vessel worthy of attracting a U.S. Title XI subsidy, in effect a Chrysler-style set of loan guarantees. It seemed a creditable beginning, and to be around this group as it deliberated was to feel swept up in euphoria, to convince oneself that this might come off, that Seattle and these people were not kidding.

Ultimately it faltered, deteriorating right up to the last sale in 1992 when USC filed for bankruptcy protection and the liner, under tow, quit Newport News. The irony of that departure taking place near her birthplace forty years earlier escaped few observers.

This could go on and on. The main point is that Miller seems to have passed up several opportunities to delve substantially into the latter part of the liner's existence. The material is there, and many of the principals are willing to talk about it. That lapse leaves the Braynard book, up to 1981, the more detailed and probing retrospective on *United States.*

JOHN CHRISTIE

Indiana State University

RONALD E. SHAW, *Canals for a Nation: The Canal Era in the United States, 1790-1860* (Lexington, KY: University Press of Kentucky, 1990).

History books on the American Canal Era of the late eighteenth through mid-nineteenth century have usually been one-dimensional affairs. Earlier canal historians, such as Alvin Harlow or Madeline Waggoner, wrote linear histories which provided essential chronological accounts but did not look deeply into the economic and cultural nature of this early era of inland transportation.

To be sure, there have been many important regional histories and economic studies of particular regions or canal networks. However, Ronald E. Shaw, in *Canals for a Nation: The Canal Era in the United States, 1790-1860* is the first canal historian to synthesize numerous studies in regional economic history, political economy, and (to a

lesser degree) social history into a comprehensive account of the development and effects of canal transportation on the early national economy.

Shaw is a professor of history at Miami University in Oxford, Ohio. His knowledge of inland commerce and canal navigation has already been exhibited in his previously published book, *Erie Water West: A History of the Erie Canal, 1792-1854*. Shaw believes that the American canal system was conceived after the Revolution as a way to preserve the classical republicanism of the emerging nation. The country's seminal leaders, including George Washington, John Marshall, and James Madison, sought to promote the construction of a national canal system that would increase the wealth of the nation as a whole.

The American canal network represented the first dedicated attempt to connect the inland waters of the nation with coastal ports and to mine the natural resources of the burgeoning nation. Although earlier eighteenth- and nineteenth-century canals had proven the potential of inland waterborne transport, it was the Erie Canal, in the 1830s, that truly proved that artificial waterways could decrease the shipping costs of moving bulky inland produce to deepwater ports.

Canals had other benefits, too. Feeder canal spurs gave access to hard-to-reach resources such as the Appalachian anthracite coal fields. They provided cheap carriage for Easterners and European immigrants to the west, where their labors were expected to add to the national product. Canals were also responsible for the creation of many cities which arose as trade centers. Populations soon grew as warehouses, taverns, stores, and homes were erected to service the people involved with the commerce.

Shaw writes that this national network of internal transportation ultimately triumphed over the regional political conflicts inherent in almost all of the individual canal projects. He believes that the influence of canals on American economic development is best understood on a national scale. While some canal systems were less successful than others, they were ultimately successful as a national transportation system. Although superseded by railroads between the 1830s and 1850s, the canals created a technological environment and an established commercial economic network which eased the transition to railway commerce. Shaw writes that canal construction reflected a "philosophy of egalitarianism and whether they were public or private, canals were always dependent in some degree upon the democratic political process" (p. 236). Here, the republican ideal was ultimately served.

Canals For a Nation is well organized and readable. Shaw also pays attention to lesser-known regional canal systems which have, in previous surveys, been ignored in favor of the more extensive northern systems. He recognizes the southern canals of the Carolinas, Georgia, and Louisiana and notes that Virginia's James River and Kanawha Canal, as an example, was "clearly a major canal of the nation" (p. 116).

Shaw also attends to technical and social aspects of the canal network. He discusses such builders as Loammi Baldwin, Benjamin Henry Latrobe, and Robert Mills, all of whose early experiences in canal construction directed them toward careers as some of nineteenth-century America's premier engineers and architects. While previous canal surveys have glossed over the design and use of the various types of canal boats, Shaw provides such primary source accounts as Charles Dickens's 1842 trip on Pennsylvania's Mainline Canal for descriptions of the appearance and uses of such boats. The author has also consulted primary sources for accounts of the laborers who built the canals and the operators who ran the boats.

A minor criticism of *Canals for a Nations* is the nature of the illustrations. Most of the few prints and photographs that are included are over-used illustrations that appear in most canal books. It is a pity that a work of such thorough research and cohesiveness missed the opportunity to use some of the more obscure images from such a picturesque industry. Otherwise, Ronald E. Shaw has written a history which should stand for some time as the standard overview text on American canal commerce.

BRUCE G. TERRELL

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THOMAS C. GILLMER, *The Pride of Baltimore: The Story of the Baltimore Clippers* (Camden, ME: International Marine/TAB Books, 1992). xiii + 188 pages, appendices, endnotes, illustrations, line drawings, glossary, index. ISBN 0-87742-309-1. $24.95.

The topsail schooners hailing from the Chesapeake at the turn of the nineteenth century were sleek, sharp-built racers later known as "Baltimore clippers." The inspiration for the dozen Fell's Point shipbuilders who built topsail schooners is unclear. Practically no plans or half-models of their hulls exist. Yet, as Thomas Gillmer notes in this small, uneven book, the Baltimore topsail schooner was the "first all-American contribution to shipbuilding and design" (p. ix). Unfortunately, Gillmer tries to do too many things in *The Pride of Baltimore*. It is by turns a history of the topsail schooner, an analysis of its naval architecture, and a memorialization of the creation in more recent days of the two replica *Pride of Baltimore* schooners (the first sank with a loss of four in a 1986 gale).

Gillmer discusses the derivation of the design without a forceful conclusion. Since he found "no direct evidence of inherited or adoptive shipbuilding knowledge" among

the Eastern Shore and Baltimore shipbuilders, he concludes that the topsail schooner was "without immediate influential ancestors." Gillmer thus attributes the design to an "intuitive awareness of hull shape" (pp. 17-18). The basis for his statement of the shipbuilders' knowledge is unclear — did he examine the libraries and correspondence of one or more of the builders? And how it was that Chesapeake builders were struck by an intuition lost to their colleagues in New York, Boston, Salem, or Philadelphia is not explained. This question-begging is matched by Gillmer's statement that Baltimore built faster vessels before the other ports, despite what he calls its "unsophisticated" shipbuilders, because of investors' activity (p. 106). That "insight" neglects investor-entrepreneurs in Philadelphia (Stephen Girard, for example), New York (John Jacob Astor, for example), and elsewhere who owned sailing ships, wanted fast ones, and could pay for them. Gillmer denigrates Howard Chapelle's suggestion in *The Baltimore Clipper* that the Bermuda sloop influenced the Baltimore schooner design, calling such suggestions "Poppycock!" (p. 12), although he does not refer to Chapelle by name. Nor does he credit a French influence, asserting in fact that the French copied the Baltimore schooner design after purchasing some topsail schooners (pp. 66-67). Perhaps this is so, although Gillmer does not detail how the design was adopted, by whom, and where, and he does not grapple with the fact (nor does Chapelle) that two of only ten or twelve 1790s Baltimore shipbuilders were Despaux and deRochebrune, both French émigrés from San Domingo. Moreover, Gillmer buries until midway in the book the credible, and obvious, forerunner, the Virginia pilot boat schooner (which existed a generation before the Baltimore schooner), noting that "no direct documentation of transference" exists (p. 104). Given the lack of documents for any aspect of this history, Gillmer's statement is hard to credit.

The Pride of Baltimore contains small errors of fact and questionable reasoning. It would be news to Admiral Nelson that he had 88 ships of the line and 125 frigates at Trafalgar (p. 46). The alternative to the flush-deck, sharply-built topsail schooners was not "large-bellied" ships that would carry "thousands more tons" of cargo (p. 42); Fell's Point wharves could only accommodate vessels of 600 tons. Similarly, Gillmer concedes that with the return of peace in 1815, the topsail schooners conducted "reasonably rewarding trade" carrying wheat and flour to the West Indies (p. 86) and later attributes their demise after 1815 to their holds being too small to carry bulk cargoes (p. 97). Much more troublesome is the author's conclusion that, despite the brilliant design, the shipbuilders were not sophisticated enough to work from drawings, which therefore must have been slow to reach them (p. 68). This is a serious and patronizing error, overlooking the fact that, for instance, William Price (barely mentioned in these pages) built warships for the navy based on Josiah Fox's drawings.

Indeed, Gillmer only mentions in passing the names of some of the topsail schooner shipbuilders. Except for Thomas Kemp, there is nothing about them as people, and nothing about the organization, economics, or methods of their shipyards or about the maritime economy in Baltimore. There is not even a map of nineteenth-century Baltimore showing the shipyards of Fell's Point.

Not surprisingly, Gillmer, the designer of the *Pride of Baltimore* replica topsail schooners that have sailed as Baltimore's roving ambassadors, is firmly in command on technical aspects and about the building of the two replica *Prides*. His explanations of the rig, the hydrodynamics of the hull, and the aerodynamics of the sail plan are complete but not within reach of the lay reader. Probably few readers will understand "sail force vectors" or stability analysis charts. His best, and most insightful, writing may be in his comparisons of the Baltimore schooner with contemporary European designs through the use of realist ship paintings. Even so, his widespread use of passive voice, the use of "us" and "our" (for "American"), and his insertion of himself detracts from his narrative.

The Pride of Baltimore is unsatisfactory as history because it is incomplete and lacks detailed discussion of where topsail schooners originated, who built them and for whom, and why they were eclipsed. Gillmer should be commended for bringing back the topsail schooner; the *Pride of Baltimore* has done much for that city's image and makes a majestic sight sailing into Baltimore's Inner Harbor. The book that needs to be written is a maritime history of Baltimore. Gillmer's book will be a starting point for that project.

FREDERICK C. LEINER

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JONATHAN G. UTLEY, *An American Battleship in Peace and War: The U.S.S.* Tennessee (Lawrence, KS: University of Kansas Press, 1991). 9¼" x 9¼", cloth, xv + 146 pages, 79 illustrations, six drawings, two maps, essay on sources, index. $25.00.

Jonathan G. Utley's *An American Battleship in Peace and War* chronicles the career of the battleship *Tennessee* (BB-43), a warship authorized by the 3 March 1915 Act of Congress. While her peacetime service was comparatively long (1920-1941), her wartime service was short but eventful (1941-1945).

Having received minor damage at Pearl Harbor on 7 December 1941, *Tennessee* underwent modernization and took part in several World War II actions. Although

designed to fight an adversary of like gun power, she only participated in one action in which she used her guns against another battleship — the Battle of Surigao Strait in October 1944. Ironically, it was in an initially peripheral mission — gunfire support of an amphibious landing — that *Tennessee* and her sisterships shone brightly during World War II in hurling tons of shells shoreward to reduce Japanese strongpoints. Decommissioned in 1947, preserved in "mothballs" for a possible reactivation that never came, *Tennessee* was removed from the Naval Vessel Register in March 1959, sold for scrap that July, and subsequently broken up.

An American Battleship in Peace and War is essentially the biography of a ship. Having been intimately involved in similar endeavors with the *Dictionary of American Naval Fighting Ships*, this reviewer can readily appreciate the amount of work involved. To approach the task correctly, as in writing the biography of an individual, the ship biographer not only needs to look at the ship but also to place the ship in her times. This Utley has done.

Rightly asserting that research for a work of this nature cannot be undertaken solely in secondary source literature, the author has conducted extensive multi-archival research in primary sources. He utilizes *Tennessee*'s deck logs, the voluminous administrative records essential to any ship's biography in allowing the historian to construct her day-to-day routine, issues of the ship's newspaper, and oral histories. He has also utilized her war diary (recounting her day-to-day operations during World War II), action reports, and material in record groups that not only deal with her crew (including the novel attempt to enlist crewmen from the state of Tennessee) but with gunnery *(Tennessee*'s reason for being) and engineering matters. Inevitably, the sheer volume of material available confronts the ship biographer with a sometimes painful choice of what to include and what to leave out of a work of this nature. Utley's skill in doing this allows him to present the reader with both a picture of the ship's career from the peacetime '20s through World War II in the Pacific and an appreciation of the regimented and sometimes claustrophobic life on board during that time.

However, one might question the validity of Utley's impled criticism that the navy spent its "scarce financial resources . . . modernizing old battleships rather than playing with [the] untested weapon of air power" (p. 23). The comparatively recent scholarship of Thomas C. Hone, in "Spending Patterns of the United States Navy, 1921-1941" *(Armed Forces and Society* 8, no. 3, Spring 1982) has indicated that the Washington and London treaties of 1922 and 1930, respectively, actually compelled the United States Navy to "maintain and modernize" the relatively scarce but still militarily important battleships in its inventory. The navy's approach to aviation was not as casual as the author seems to imply ("playing with [the] . . . weapon of air power"). It was developed as aggressively as technology and congressional appropriations would permit. Along those same lines, it is also questionable to assert that *Tennessee* was being prepared to fight the last war rather then the next (p. 28). The installation of antiaircraft guns mirrored a clear concern with aviation, but the number of such weapons reflected the capabilities of the aircraft then currently available, not the concern for the threat itself.

Philosophical considerations aside, it seems that sometimes — all to often — pictures chosen for illustrations in books are merely inserted for their own sake, and not for purposes of complementing the text. Thankfully, in *An American Battleship in Peace and War*, the author's selection of illustrations reflects considerable care. The captions are, by and large, extended and informative and complement the text. This reviewer particularly applauds the use not only of photographs but also of cartoons and the covers of ship's newspapers and menus as illustrations.

On the debit side, the persistent use of the word "aboard" when "on board" or "in" should be used represents an annoying editorial lapse. Furthermore, while the author's selection of photographs is praiseworthy, he is ill-served by the publisher's "guttering" of thirty-seven of them (including the first three in the book!). Far better for a photo to appear horizontally on one page rather than extending across two, especially when some details and picture composition are lost in the binding! Some readers may find objectionable the inclusion of a grisly photograph (p. 108) of a wrecked berthing compartment complete with the mangled wreckage of bunks with dead sailors trapped in them. The face of one of the victims is clearly visible; were I related to that unfortunate man I would perhaps find the reproduction of this particular picture in poor taste.

An American Battleship in Peace and War artfully blends military, social, and diplomatic history. One hopes that the success of this volume will encourage this publisher to attempt future works of this nature. It is a worthwhile field of endeavor.

ROBERT J. CRESSMAN

Naval Historical Center

GREG DENING, *Mr Bligh's Bad Language: Passion, Power and Theatre on the* Bounty (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992). xii + 445 pages, maps, illustrations, bibliography, index. $34.95.

Robert Dodd's 1790 aquatint of "Lieutenant Bligh Leaving the *Bounty*" has in its dramatic and accurate portrayal long typified mutiny at sea: it is featured, for

example, on the dust jacket of Leonard F. Guttridge's recent study *Mutiny: A History of Naval Insurrection* (Naval Institute Press, 1992). Greg Dening, in his study of the *Bounty* episode, discusses Dodd's representation. But in fact Dening's purpose is more typified in some ways by J.B. Handelsman's 1989 *New Yorker* cartoon, drawn from the same perspective, in which Bligh's launch is cut loose by a crew driven to desperation by Bligh's "ruthless splitting of infinitives": "'So, Mr. Christian! You propose to unceremoniously cast me adrift?'" It might, of course, be thought that there was little more to be said about the *Bounty* and her crew, but such a conclusion would be premature. Dening has indeed found much to ponder from his anthro-historical viewpoint, working through three separate but linked narratives: of the events connected with the mutiny, of the interaction of islanders and mutineers, and of the subsequent treatment of the *Bounty* drama in art, literature, and — above all — theater.

To Dening, it was in the theater of his vessel that Bligh misplayed his role, failing to grasp the "dialectics of dominance and deference" (p. 28), violating the unwritten rules of "social space," above all upon his quarterdeck, and flaunting his bad language of deed as well as word. It was not only his cursing that brought trouble, but also his other misguided steps, such as his assumption of the office of purser (and thus responsibility for penny-pinching over the rations), or his flogging of crew members before an audience of native observers. Throughout his career, Bligh was hardworking, purposeful, ambitious, and cordially hated. The inexorable fate of one who could not distinguish between punishment and discipline was mutiny.

But it is in his exploration of the world of the "beach," where islander and seafarer cultures met and mingled, that Dening excels. This will come as no surprise to readers of his seminal work on Pacific studies, *Islands and Beaches: Discourses on a Silent Land: Marquesas, 1774-1880* (1981). On this middle ground, societies learn, or fail to learn, about each other, alternately amused or horrified by the other's conduct — by the piles of bones of humans sacrificed to the god 'Oro, or the westerners' breach of tabu. It was mutual: "They possessed one another in ethnographic moments that got transcribed into texts and symbols. . . . Each made cargo of the things collected from one another, put the cargo in their respective museums, remade the things they collected into new cultural artifacts. They entertained themselves in their histories of their encounters" (p. 281). It was a confused, inexplicable world, though not quite so confused as Dening's map maker has made it. The key map of Matavai Bay (p. 185) is simply upside down and backwards, with Point Venus on the southern coast and Marae Point and Bounty's Channel to its northeast (they are actually to the southwest towards Papeete). This is an unfortunate confusion to the newcomer to Tahitian geography; "dear reader," often directly addressed by Dening, is best advised to use other maps. But the central theme of the nature of societal interaction which makes this book so valuable is in no way undercut by this error.

The final section of *Mr Bligh's Bad Language* makes Dening's important and valid point that any historical event is a composite of the event and what we make of it in the aftermath. Beginning soon after the event itself, the drama of the mutiny, the chase, and the eventual escape of some of the guilty to a remote paradise (of sorts) has often been portrayed on the stage. Theater gives form to the event: the history of theater is the theater of history in that sense. "Bligh," to many of us, evokes not the calm visage looking outward from the several portraits which Dening reproduces, but the cunning weakness of Charles Laughton, the quintessential Bligh despite the best efforts of Trevor Howard or Anthony Hopkins. Fletcher Christian, on the other hand, may be rugged Clark Gable, posturing Marlon Brando, or undisciplined Mel Gibson as the mood suits. That there are such choices is an important part of Dening's study.

Overall, this is an extraordinary book, the result of twenty years of reading and reflection, a fact demonstrated in part by the extensive notes on sources and bibliography, which together occupy fifty pages (pp. 375-427). With a study of such breadth across oceans and peoples and centuries, inevitably readers may take issue with this or that point. Dening seems unnecessarily apologetic, for example, in defense of the quite small dose of cliometrics in his text (punishment statistics in the main). Nor has he explored every intriguing byroad. For example, the issue of tattooing might well appeal to a historian like Dening well-schooled in anthropology, but he gives only a brief reference or two to the crew's adoption of such "badges of independence" (p. 246) — leaving the impression that they were a Tahitian addition, and not at least in part acquired before the voyage. But in the end, Dening, Emeritus Professor of History at the University of Melbourne, has written a fine book, important for anyone concerned with the eighteenth-century naval world, issues of power and punishment in any era, and above all the Pacific island environment in which Dening has made himself such an expert. In short, this is a book to be acquired and savored — a book, for once, worth its price.

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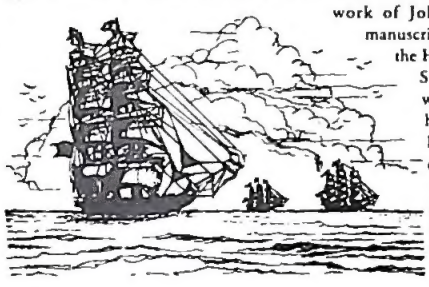

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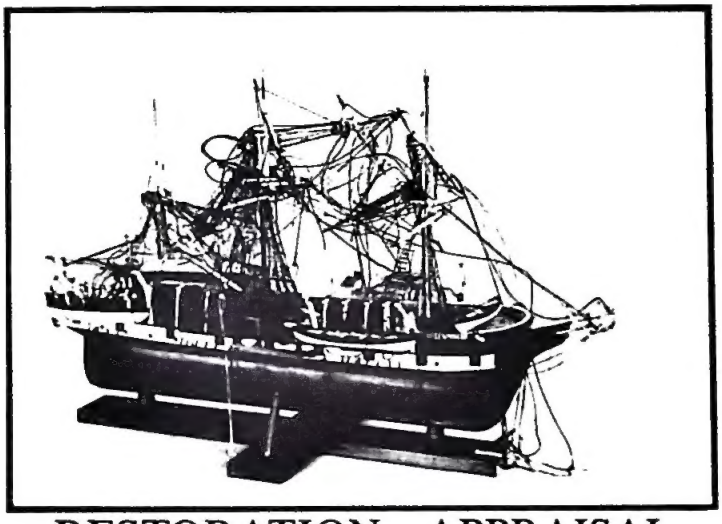

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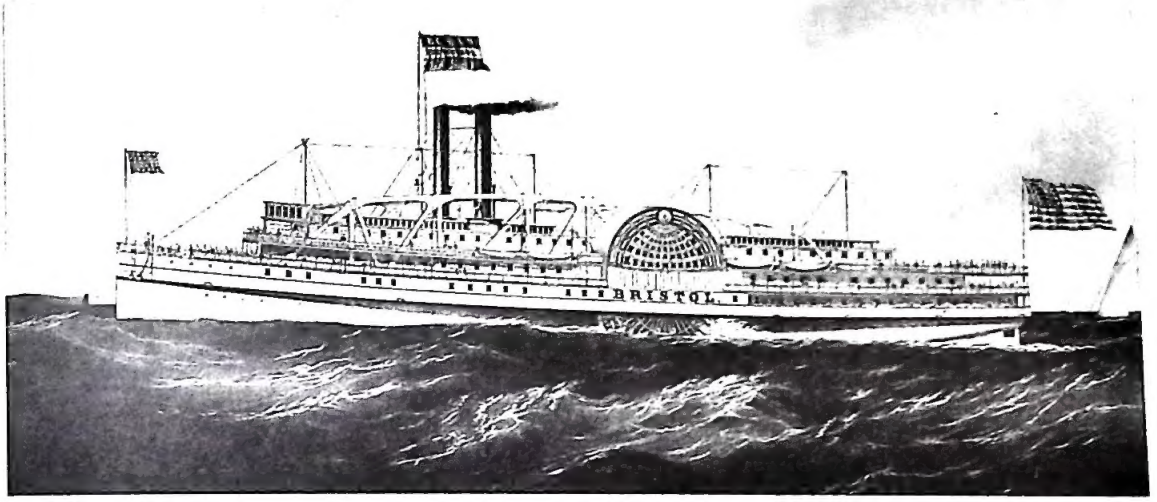

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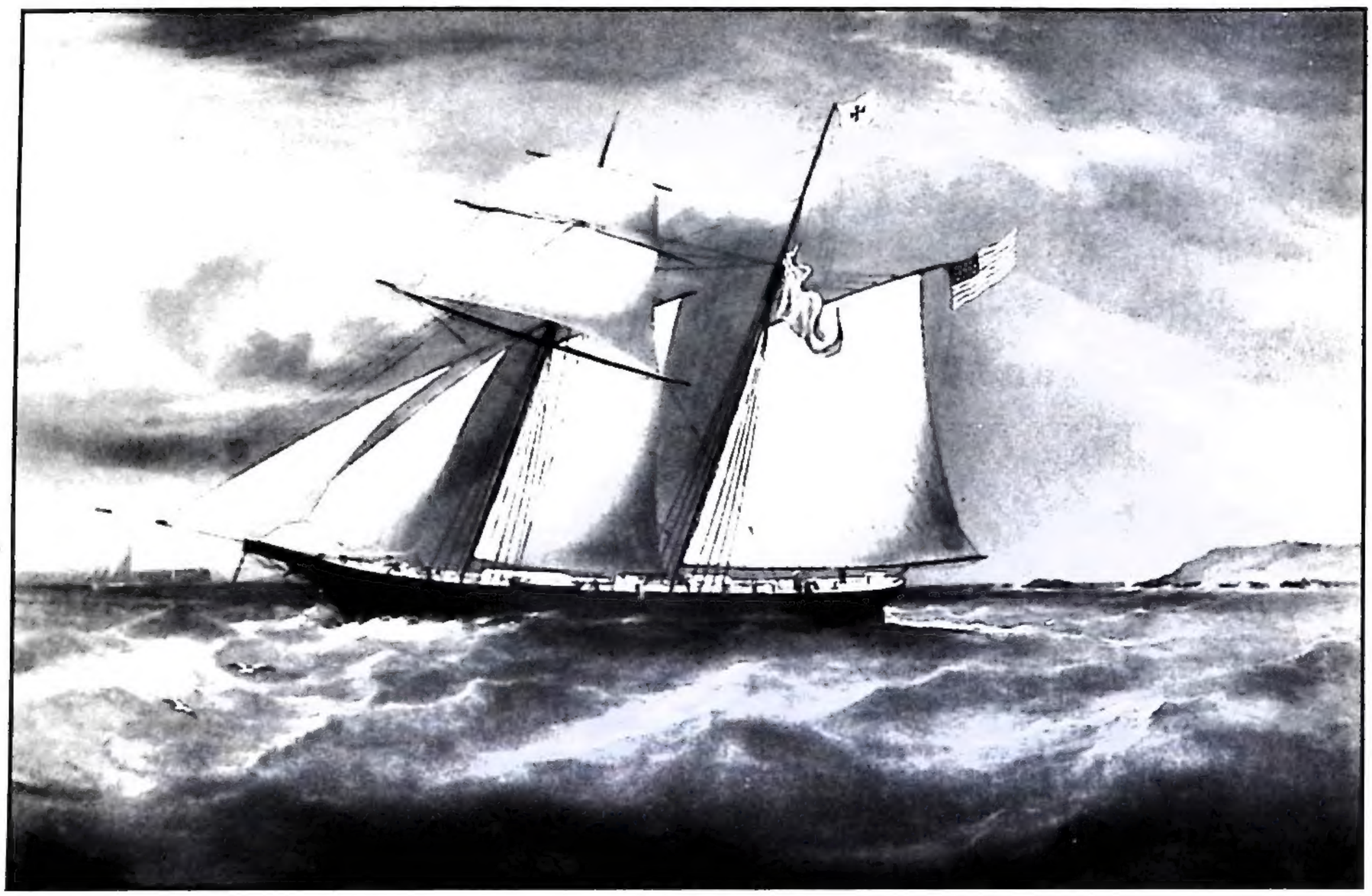

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